

Jewish  
Women's  
Archive

SHARING STORIES  
INSPIRING CHANGE

18

ANNUAL  
REPORT

19



**“JWA is a treasure. A virtual monument to the diversity of Jewish women’s stories, it has rescued and honored voices that were lost, celebrates contemporary lives, and fosters the next generation of leaders. The past, present, and future of Jewish women has a home and an advocate in JWA. What on earth would we do without it?”**

Anita Diamant, author of *The Red Tent* and founding president of Mayyim Hayyim Community Mikveh and Education Center

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**The mission of the Jewish Women's Archive is to document the stories of Jewish women, elevate their voices, and inspire them to be agents of change.**

JWA is the world's largest source of information about Jewish women and a dynamic Jewish feminist organization that shapes discourse and inspires action. By training the thought leaders of tomorrow and sparking conversations on gender, Judaism, and history across multimedia platforms and programs, JWA provides insight and context for today's world and enables people of all genders and backgrounds to envision a more just and equitable future.

*Cover Image: Holocaust survivor Irene Butter with her brother Werner at the shore, circa 1939. Photo courtesy of Irene Butter*

**Dear friends, allow me to introduce myself. For years I have admired the work of the Jewish Women's Archive and am utterly delighted to serve as its new Board Chair.**

Since insisting as a little girl on dressing up as the rebellious Persian princess Vashti for my religious school's Purim parade, I have lived at the intersection of my Jewish and feminist identities. Today, as a woman, a rabbi, a historian, a mother, and a citizen of the world, I better understand the complexities and nuances, injustices and privileges that surround me and am grateful to JWA for providing a way forward in the world today.

**"...the more stories we gather, the greater the potential to change perspectives, open minds, and inspire positive action on a grand scale."**



Thank you to all the donors and stakeholders who support our endeavors and enable us to go from strength to strength. Listening to the heroic voices of Jewish women on JWA's podcast, *Can We Talk?*, such as those who discovered the BRCA gene in their lineage and others who chose alternative routes to motherhood, gives me strength and courage, particularly at this moment in time. I am inspired and hopeful reading the raw and honest words of the Rising Voices teen fellows and witnessing their achievements in classrooms, local communities, and beyond. I feel proud and alive watching Judith Rosenbaum hold court on a multi-faith panel on the future of feminism. I know that JWA's work has had a profound impact on the nearly two million people we reached in the

JWA and Keshet staff members stand for LGBTQ and women's equality in Jewish life



“...all [people] are equal partners in shaping communal conversation and driving social change.”

past year alone. Not only is JWA changing the narrative with stories we document, but we are also creating tools to help others amplify their own voices. *Story Aperture*, JWA's newly launched mobile app, is a grassroots story-collecting initiative that allows every individual to play an active role in building a more inclusive and equitable future. As supporters of JWA, we know that the more stories we gather, the greater the potential to change perspectives, open minds, and inspire positive action on a grand scale.

These are just a few of the platforms we are prioritizing in a strategic plan that will guide JWA through 2021. With this roadmap, we are poised to reach for our North Star—a world in which the voices and achievements of people of all genders, past and present, are known and valued, and all are equal partners in shaping communal conversation and driving social change.

Thank you for joining our visionary leader, Judith Rosenbaum, and me in this critical work. We look forward to hearing which JWA programs and initiatives resonate with you.

May 5780 be a sweet and fulfilling year for all. L'shanah tovah,

Rabbi Carole B. Balin, Ph.D.  
Chair, Board of Directors



**Q&A** *with*  
**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**  
**JUDITH ROSENBAUM**

**WHAT ARE YOU MOST PROUD OF THIS YEAR?**

There are so many aspects of our work that I'm proud of—it's hard to choose just one or two! I'm very proud of the work we've done to make sure that JWA lives its values and that our organizational culture is infused with creativity, collaboration, playfulness, learning, and kindness. I also love seeing JWA cited as a resource in major news outlets like *CNN*, the *New York Times*, and *Newsweek*, and knowing that without JWA, their stories would be incomplete or inaccurate.

**WHAT WAS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING YOU LEARNED THIS YEAR?**

I feel lucky to spend my days steeped in the wisdom of generations of Jewish women. One of the many things I've learned from their choices and lives is to take risks and take action even when I'm afraid. This year, I spoke up as a Jewish feminist in contexts where doing so felt scary, and it was gratifying to know I was heard and my words were appreciated. I suspect I'll need to keep re-learning this lesson.

**WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE THING TO HEAR FROM THE JWA COMMUNITY?**

Often after I speak, people come up to me and say, "Why haven't I heard these stories before? Why wasn't I taught about this?" And while it's frustrating to know that there are still so many absences and silences in what we learn, the question invigorates me because it suggests further action—we can be moved to challenge the status quo. One story can change the way we see the world and spur us to change the world for others, too.

**WHAT GIVES YOU HOPE THESE DAYS?**

I am so inspired by the leadership of our Rising Voices Fellows and alumnae. Talking to these amazing young women about their lives, questions, and dreams for the future, and reading their thoughtful and provocative essays, I am confident that we are in good hands.



## CELEBRATING JWA'S ACHIEVEMENTS...

In 2018, JWA embarked on a new strategic plan to guide the focus of our work through 2021. Thanks to the dedication of lay leadership and staff, and the generous support of our donors, this first year of implementation brought countless accomplishments. Together, we are speaking louder, including more voices, and increasing our impact.

**The following pages highlight the progress we've made in each of our strategic priorities.**

**Diversifying Our Content, Voices, and Audiences**

**Cultivating Young Jewish Women Leaders**

**Expanding Thought Leadership and Reach**

**Securing Our Long-Term Impact**

## Diversifying Our Content, Voices, and Audiences

Building on JWA's foundational commitment to a Jewish narrative that includes underrepresented voices and experiences, we are continuing to engage a broad audience on multiple platforms and grow the range of stories we share. This year, JWA worked with scholars around the world to begin expanding our encyclopedia; amplified women's voices with nine new *Can We Talk?* podcast episodes on topics related to politics, ritual, motherhood, and health; and launched the *Story Aperture* mobile app to put story-collecting tools in your hands (literally). In these ways, among others, JWA is shifting culture with the diversity of stories we bring to an ever-growing audience.



**Rabbi Mira Rivera, the first Filipino-American woman to be ordained a rabbi, was featured in #ShareHerStory, a JWA project in partnership with the Jewish Multiracial Network and Repair the World.**

Photo by Gili Getz.

**“The Jewish Multiracial Network is grateful to be in partnership with the Jewish Women’s Archive. This collaboration has given our community a chance to expand our impact, developing new content that is inclusive of Jews of Color and multiracial Jewish families and bringing much-needed resources about diverse Jewish communities to a broader audience.”**

—Kalycia Trishana Watson, Interim President of the Jewish Multiracial Network



## Cultivating Young Jewish Women Leaders

We are proud to be training a strong network of young Jewish women as leaders and shapers of public conversations. JWA recently commenced our largest and most diverse cohort of Rising Voices Fellows to date and secured funding to further engage our growing network of alumnae. Participants in the nationally-recognized Rising Voices Fellowship (RVF), which trains female-identifying teens to use writing as a tool for social justice, describe the experience as transformative. After graduating from RVF, alumnae use the knowledge they gained at JWA to change the world through their words and actions.

**“An articulate piece of writing will prompt others to examine their own beliefs, and it was magical to watch our posts spark discourse.”**

—Sarah Groustra, college student, writer, and activist, RVF 2015-16



**The 2018-19 Rising Voices  
Fellows at their Siyyum  
(graduation) celebration**  
May 2019

**“The Rising Voices Fellowship helped me develop my voice and take pride in it. The feeling of seeing my name and words published for the first time is something I cannot even describe. Learning together with other young Jewish women from around the country about the Jewish female experience, past and present, was inspiring and empowering.”**

—Molly Weiner, high school student, RVF 2018-19

## Expanding Thought Leadership & Reach

Recognized as a worldwide thought leader and expert on gender, Judaism, and history, JWA offers much-needed commentary on the issues of our time. In the past year, we helped shape discourse on pressing concerns including #metoo and antisemitism. We provided trusted information to media outlets and communities globally and cultivated important conversations through public programs, prominent publications, growing partnerships, and an improved website that drew more than 1.6 million visitors from around the world.

**“Judith Rosenbaum is nothing short of a visionary, leading an organization through rigorous historical research and profound storytelling to help us see the world as it ought to be. She and JWA appreciate the complicated legacies of Jewish women and embrace those legacies as guides for activism today.”**

—Lila Corwin Berman, Murray Friedman Chair of American Jewish History at Temple University



**Judith Rosenbaum**  
speaking with  
**Michal Gera-Margaliot**  
of the Israel Women's  
Network at the Boston  
Jewish Film Festival  
November 2018

## Securing Our Long-Term Impact

Financial sustainability is essential to making our work possible. JWA is more robust due to deepened engagement with those in our orbit and development strategies such as multi-year gift commitments and legacy giving. We're cultivating budding philanthropists, such as our Rising Voices Fellows who are proud to give back, and building initiatives to engage more young adult supporters, who are vital to our future. We are grateful to all of our dedicated supporters for the many ways they choose to give.



JWA staff member Dina Adelsky with Alice Shalvi, Israeli professor, educator, and feminist. *The Shalvi/Hyman Encyclopedia of Jewish Women* will honor the legacy of Alice Shalvi and the late pioneering historian Paula Hyman, as well as the late Moshe Shalvi, whose dedication brought the previous Encyclopedia edition to fruition.

**“It is an honor to leave a contribution, legally stated in my will, to secure the future of an organization that is committed to a multigenerational conversation, educates in a hip 21st century fashion, and gives us faces and stories from the past to improve tomorrow. My enthusiasm, participation, and financial legacy will help make magic happen for the Jewish women who come after me. My gift is a lift for the next generation.”**

—Ellen Passman, JWA legacy donor and annual supporter

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*2018-19 Rising Voices Fellows celebrate at their Siyyum (graduation) in May 2019*

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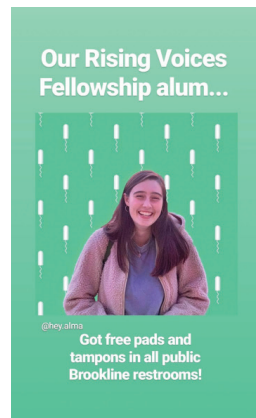
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#ONTHISDAY, CONGRESS APPROVED THE #19THAMENDMENT



Happy #MayDay!

Are you doing anything re: labor rights today?

Making sure I take my lunch break even though I had meetings from 11 to 2!

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*JWA staff member Mikki Pugh introducing Story Aperture, JWA's new story-collecting mobile app, to attendees at a Baltimore event in April 2019*

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—Jeff Mandell,  
customer of the JWA Store



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*\*As of July 1, 2019*

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One Harvard Street, Suite 200  
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