



# STANDING TOGETHER

A Community Response  
to Antisemitism

**AJC** San Diego



Jewish Federation  
of San Diego

February 2, 2025  
Hilton Bayfront Hotel





# STANDING TOGETHER

A Community  
Response to  
Antisemitism

**AJC** San Diego



## AGENDA

12:00 pm – 12:30 pm	Registration Opens
12:30 pm – 1:45 pm	Opening Plenary
1:45 pm – 2:15 pm	Lunch Break
2:15 pm – 3:05 pm	Breakout Session #1
3:05 pm – 3:15 pm	Break
3:15 pm – 4:05 pm	Breakout Session #2
4:05 pm – 4:15 pm	Break
4:15 pm – 5:30 pm	Closing Plenary

# WELCOME

## TO STANDING TOGETHER 2025

Dear Friends and Allies,

It is our honor to welcome you to Standing Together: A Community Response to Antisemitism. Your presence here today – whether you identify as part of the Jewish community or as an ally – sends a powerful message that hate and intolerance have no place in our society.

Over the past year, our world has faced a sobering rise in antisemitism. From the hateful rhetoric festering online to violent acts targeting Jewish individuals and institutions, this age-old scourge continues to find new expressions. Here in San Diego, we've witnessed firsthand the impact of these incidents on Jewish students, professionals, and families. But today, we stand together – **not just as a Jewish community, but as a broad coalition of individuals and organizations committed to fighting hate in all its forms.**

Combating antisemitism is not solely a Jewish responsibility – it requires the collective efforts of our entire community, including our allies from diverse backgrounds, faiths, and sectors. Your support, advocacy, and willingness to speak out against antisemitism are essential to ensuring a safer and more inclusive future for all. Whether you are a faith leader, an educator, a civic leader, or simply someone committed to justice, your role as an ally makes a profound difference.

This event is an opportunity to learn, engage, and take meaningful action. Together, we will explore ways to respond to antisemitism, foster understanding, and build stronger partnerships that will help us create a San Diego where everyone can thrive without fear.

We hope you leave today feeling empowered, informed, and inspired to continue standing up against antisemitism wherever it appears. Thank you for being here, for your solidarity, and for your commitment to justice and dignity for all communities.

Together, we are stronger. Together, we can ensure that San Diego remains a beacon of hope and resilience for generations to come.

With gratitude and resolve,



**SARA E. BROWN, PhD**  
Regional Director,  
American Jewish Committee  
San Diego



**HEIDI GANTWERK**  
President & CEO,  
Jewish Federation of  
San Diego

# ABOUT AJC

American Jewish Committee (AJC) is the global advocacy organization for the Jewish people. We work to shape a brighter future by taking on the toughest challenges and pursuing the most transformative opportunities.

From world capitals to college campuses, AJC works with leaders across society to stand up for Israel; confront antisemitism, no matter the source; and uphold the democratic values that unite us.

The AJC San Diego office opened in January 2023 at a critical moment for the Jewish community in the area. Antisemitism is on the rise, and San Diego has not been immune to this hate.

In San Diego, AJC connects our community with American Jewish Committee's global advocacy work to enhance the well-being of the Jewish people and Israel. By working with elected officials, universities, school administrators, media, and intergroup and interfaith partners, we have developed a growing footprint of impact here in San Diego. Our efforts at the local level advances AJC's broader priorities: combating the growing threat of antisemitism, promoting Israel's place in the world, and championing the values of democracy and pluralism.

Wherever the Jewish people need us, AJC is there. Join us.

## WE THANK OUR BOARD FOR THEIR LEADERSHIP AND VISION

Alan Viterbi, Board President

Mitch Siegler, Immediate Past Board President

David Bark

David Ellman

Naomi Harris

Wayne Harris

Joanna Herman

Raquel Kramer

Robin Layton

Sharon Rosen Leib

David Michan

Tad Parzen

Stacy Rosenberg

Jeff Schindler

Jerry Turk

Eileen Glasser Wesley

## THANK YOU TO OUR SYMPOSIUM COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Netanya Cranford, Robin Layton, Sharon Rosen Leib

# PROGRAM SPONSORS

WITH SPECIAL THANKS  
TO OUR SYMPOSIUM PARTNER



**Jewish Federation**  
of San Diego

THANK YOU TO OUR  
TEEN TRACK SPONSOR

**THE MELVIN GARB FOUNDATION**

## ADVOCATE LEVEL



Ilana Gold

## SUPPORTER LEVEL

Jerry and Carole Turk  
Caryn and Alan Viterbi

## ALLY LEVEL



Paul Needelman and Amy Krause  
Phyllis Epstein  
Maizel Family  
Belinda and Uri Feldman

## FRIEND LEVEL



Julie and George Bronstein  
Claire and David Ellman  
Stephanie and Michael Epstein  
Jane and Colin Scher

# BREAKOUT SESSIONS

## DEI: WHAT WE GOT WRONG AND HOW WE CAN MAKE IT RIGHT

Join Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) experts who will discuss the history of DEI, the major challenges it has presented, and the harm that has been caused. This session offers an opportunity for learning and conversation, including an exclusive Q&A session, to identify paths to coming together as a community to make it right.

### FEATURING:

Whitney Weathers, M.Ed., Managing Director of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice, UpStart

Nicole Nevarez, leader, consultant, coach, facilitator

Kiyomi Kowalski, Vice President of Partnerships,  
Project Shema

## EDUCATION, NOT INDOCTRINATION

American Jewish Committee (AJC) is at the forefront of confronting bias and political indoctrination in the classroom. Hear directly from our experts about the issues, challenges, opportunities, and solutions present in K-12 education.

### FEATURING:

Seth Brysk, Regional Director, AJC Northern California

Danielle Kroo, Director of Operations, AJC Center for  
Education Advocacy

Moderated By: Tammy Gillies, AJC Managing Director, Regional  
Offices



## DISINFORMATION IN THE ERA OF SOCIAL MEDIA

At a time of misinformation and disinformation on social media platforms and advances in AI, how can we tell truth from fiction? Hear from experts and practitioners about how to address and combat misinformation and disinformation during times of conflict and heightened antisemitism.

### FEATURING:

Mike Pell, Inventor and Director, The Microsoft Garage – NYC  
Amy Albertson, Jewish advocate, educator, influencer  
Melanie Maron Pell, AJC Chief Field Operations Officer

## IN OUR TOWN: ANTISEMITISM AND SAN DIEGO JEWS

Anti-Jewish hate crimes are at an all-time high in California. Take a deep dive with local leaders into the Jewish community of San Diego and learn how antisemitism is impacting daily life in America's Finest City.

### FEATURING:

Heidi Gantwerk, President and CEO, Jewish Federation of San Diego  
Rabbi Yael Ridberg, Congregation Dor Hadash  
Darren Schwartz, Chief Planning and Strategy Officer, Jewish Federation of San Diego

## COLLEGE CAMPUSES: HOTBEDS FOR HATE OR OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE FUTURE?

Explore the challenges and opportunities around combating antisemitism and building community on college and university campuses. Hear directly from the professionals and student leaders who are actively tackling antisemitism on campus to understand what is really happening and how you can be a part of the solution.

### FEATURING:

Richard Leib, Chair of the Board of Regents, University of California  
Karen Parry, Executive Director, Hillel of San Diego  
Jacob Rendler, UC San Diego Student Leader

## PRACTICING ALLYSHIP

Too often, we think of allyship in theoretical terms. Hear from community leaders about how they have turned allyship into a verb and taken meaningful action, standing against the spread of antisemitism in their respective communities.

### FEATURING:

Adela de la Torre, PhD, President, San Diego State University

Nicole Murray-Ramirez, Human Rights Advocate and Commissioner, City of San Diego Human Relations Commission

Michael Lovett-Colyer, PhD, Vice President for Mission Integration, University of San Diego

Moderated By: Tad Parzen, President and CEO, Burnham Center for Community Advancement

## TEEN TRACK

Generously supported by the Melvin Garb Foundation

Jewish high schoolers will attend exclusive workshops with noted experts, social media influencers, and campus activists about Jewish identity, antisemitism, and how to be an effective advocate and leader.

### FEATURING:

Kelsey Greenberg Young, co-facilitator of the Leaders for Tomorrow program, former Education Director for ADL San Diego

Ronnie Volman, Jewish student activist at UC San Diego

Sophie Harris, founder of @hotgirlsdoshabbat, Jewish social media activist

Alissa Bernstein, Assistant Director, AJC Los Angeles, and contributing author to the edited volume, *Young Zionist Voices*

# OPENING PLENARY SPEAKERS



SARA E.  
BROWN

Sara E. Brown, PhD is a non-profit executive, educator, and world-renowned expert on genocide studies. Sara holds the first Ph.D. in comparative genocide studies from the Strassler Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies at Clark University. She was a director of Chhange, a Holocaust, human rights, and genocide education non-profit and managed post-secondary education programming for USC Shoah Foundation.

Sara has an extensive background in non-profit advocacy and in education. She has worked at the Interdisciplinary Center in Israel, conducted genocide-related research in Rwanda, and served as a project coordinator in refugee camps in Tanzania. Sara has taught courses on history, human rights, and mass violence at San Diego State University, Kean University, and Worcester State University and is widely published in major news outlets and academic journals.

Sara is the author of *Gender and the Genocide in Rwanda: Women as Perpetrators and Rescuers* and the co-editor of the Routledge Handbook on Religion, Mass Atrocity, and Genocide. Sara has also consulted for a number of international organizations, including the United Nations, Aegis Trust, and Common Circles. Sara particularly enjoys teaching the next generation about the Holocaust and the state of Israel.



HEIDI  
GANTWERK

Heidi Gantwerk is the President and Chief Executive Officer of Jewish Federation of San Diego County. Prior to joining Federation, Heidi served as the founder and principal of HG Consulting Group, LLC, where she served as a longtime consultant to Federation and many Jewish organizations.

At HG Consulting, Heidi provided customized design and facilitation for the public and private sectors, with diverse clients including the San Diego Airport Authority, the Port of San Diego, the Cities of Vista and Carlsbad. She focused in particular on San Diego's Jewish agencies and organizations. Clients included the Jewish Community Foundation, Lawrence Family Jewish Community Center, Jewish Community Farming Initiative, Leichtag Foundation, The Butterfly Project, Hillel of San Diego, and many others.

Previously, Ms. Gantwerk was Vice President of Viewpoint Learning for 10 years, where she led work in civic engagement and public policy research, building on a background in community relations and media production combined with experience as a foundation program officer.

She is an expert at leading strategic planning processes, community and stakeholder dialogue, scenario development and civic engagement.

Ms. Gantwerk holds a B.A. in psychology from Yale University. She has been a highly engaged lay leader in San Diego's Jewish Community for nearly two decades, most recently as Board Chair of the San Diego Jewish Academy, and as a board member of the San Diego Center for Jewish Culture and Hillel of San Diego. She was born in Israel and is part of the team of musical service leaders at Congregation Beth Israel. She lives in San Diego with her husband and has 3 adult sons.



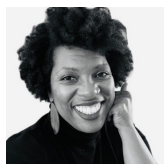
FRANKLIN  
FOER

Franklin Foer, one of the nation's most respected political journalists, is a staff writer at the *Atlantic*. For seven years, he was the editor of the *New Republic* magazine. His most recent book, *The Last Politician: Inside Joe Biden's White House and the Struggle for America's Future* was an instant *New York Times* bestseller.

*Politico* wrote, "You might love Biden or you might hate Biden, but either way, if you want to understand him, you will want to buy this book." He's also the author of *World Without Mind: The Existential Threat of Big Tech* and *How Soccer Explains the World: An Unlikely Theory of Globalization*, translated into 27 languages, which *Sports Illustrated* named on the "most influential books of the decade." Foer also co-edited *Jewish Jocks: An Unorthodox Hall of Fame*, a winner of the National Jewish Book Award. His work has also won the Plume Libre prize and the Premio Terzani. He is a native Washingtonian.

# BREAKOUT SESSION SPEAKERS

## DEI: WHAT WE GOT WRONG AND HOW WE CAN MAKE IT RIGHT



WHITNEY  
WEATHERS, M.ED.

Based near Kansas City, Missouri, Whitney Weathers serves as the Managing Director of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice (DEIJ) at UpStart. In this role, she partners with stakeholders to create inclusive opportunities and dismantle barriers for participants from historically underrepresented identities while also developing leaders to combat inequity.

Whitney is currently pursuing her doctorate in Black Leadership and Ministry at Nazarene Theological Seminary: her research focuses on belonging and inclusion for Black women on predominantly white seminary campuses. Whitney holds degrees from Vanderbilt University (Urban Education) and Tennessee State University (English). She is also a proud member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. An award-winning educator, Whitney has been recognized for her impactful work with students from historically marginalized communities. Her work has been featured on National Public Radio and Colorado Public Radio. Recently, she joined the board of BAMAH Arts, an organization that is connected to creating a bridge between artists from Israel and North American colleges, communities, and Jewish camps. Outside of her professional endeavors, Whitney is the mom of four amazing kiddos and the wife to one amazing husband. When she's not advocating for social justice, she enjoys reading, writing, and cooking. Finally, Whitney is passionate about interfaith coalition building.



NICOLE  
NEVAREZ

Nicole Nevarez is a dynamic leader, consultant, coach and facilitator who specializes in helping organizations, teams, and individuals thrive. Known for her empathy, warmth, and ability to simplify complex and even sensitive situations, Nicole offers tailored guidance, actionable insights, and practical tools to drive meaningful progress in organizational culture, team dynamics, and personal and professional development. Central to her work is a commitment to helping individuals align their intrinsic values with their actions.

With over 25 years of experience as an educator, facilitator, and spiritual seeker, Nicole draws from a rich background in organizational development, management, philanthropy, equity, and theater. Her expertise, combined with years of teaching, group facilitation, coaching, and leadership, enables her to deliver engaging, accessible, and impactful interactive experiences.

Nicole meets her clients where they are, designing bespoke services that maximize outcomes and foster transformation.

Nicole's knows that deep systemic change begins with intentional self-reflection and organizational introspection and making the implicit, explicit. By guiding her clients through this process, she empowers them to create lasting impact in their lives, work and communities.

As an entrepreneur, Nicole served as the Founding CEO of Ta'amod, an initiative fostering safety, equity, and well-being in nonprofit workplaces. A graduate of the UpStart Venture Accelerator program, she serves on the board of the San Diego Center for Jewish Culture at the Lawrence Family JCC. After 40+ years in New York, Nicole relocated to San Diego, CA, in 2020. She lives there with her partner, Rabbi Jason Nevarez, their two children, and Sadie the dog.



KIYOMI  
KOWALSKI

Kiyomi Kowalski is an Afro-Latin, queer, Jewish, Marine Corps veteran, mother who works to ensure that all of the intersecting identities of her and her children feel at home in any space. If there is one word to sum up her life's work it would be "inclusion."

Kiyomi's social justice activism is centered on creating more inclusive spaces for Jewish people of all backgrounds as well as eradicating racism and antisemitism. To that end, she develops, produces, and facilitates panels, workshops, and discussions on the topics of race, racism, and antisemitism. She is the co-founder of Jewbian Princess, a Black, Jewish women-led inclusion practice focused on supporting inclusion efforts within the Jewish community.

In her work as the VP of Partnerships at Project Shema, she utilizes non-violent communication approaches to coach people through tough conversations and promote productive dialogue across difference while nurturing compassion for Jewish people.

Kiyomi lives with her partner and two children in the suburbs of Los Angeles where she can be found watercolor painting, embroidering, and sewing pieces of flare to inspire a more just world. Learn more about her at [KiyomiKowalski.com](http://KiyomiKowalski.com).



## EDUCATION, NOT INDOCTRINATION



SETH  
BRYSK

Seth Brysk is the AJC Regional Director of Northern California. Previously, he served as the Chief Officer of External Affairs and Partnerships for the SF Jewish Community Federation, ADL Central Pacific Regional Director, AJC Regional Director in Los Angeles, and San Francisco Hillel Executive Director. He is a former provisional delegate to the US State Department Advisory Committee on Religious Freedom Abroad and representative to the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance.

The Republic of Poland honored him as an Officer of the Order of Merit. He played a critical role in passing an inclusive hate crime law in Utah. Gavin Newsom appointed him to the Governor's Council on Holocaust and Genocide Education. Brysk was also recognized by FBI Director Christopher Wray with the Community Leadership Award for his service and commitment to justice.

He earned degrees from UC Berkeley in Political Science and from Tel Aviv University in International Relations.



DANIELLE  
KROO

Danielle Kroo serves as Director of Operations for the American Jewish Committee's (AJC) Center for Education Advocacy, where she leads strategic initiatives to combat antisemitism in educational settings. At AJC's newest division, she operationalizes strategies and programs to empower educators and administrators to effectively address antisemitism while promoting inclusive learning environments across K-12 and higher education institutions. Her expertise in advocacy and education has been shaped by over two decades of experience across mission-driven organizations.

Her dedication to Jewish advocacy began with a twelve-year tenure at AIPAC in legislative, fundraising, and political roles. Later, as Vice President of Operations at the Global Good Fund, a nonprofit accelerator for social entrepreneurs, Danielle worked with leaders globally and measured social impact. Her time at Lehigh University's Development and Advancement department enhanced her understanding of higher education ecosystems, complementing her service on the Jewish Day School of the Lehigh Valley board.

Most recently, through her consulting firm SLD Impact Solutions, she has helped organizations scale their operations, measure their impact, and maximize organizational efficiency. At AJC, she applies this comprehensive experience to addressing antisemitism in educational spaces.

Danielle holds a Master of Science in Political Science from Lehigh University, and a B.A. in International Relations from Michigan State University. From her early involvement with Young Judaea to her current role, she continues to advance educational excellence while combating antisemitism.

## DISINFORMATION IN THE ERA OF SOCIAL MEDIA



MIKE  
PELL

Renowned as an outlaw within the tech industry, Mike Pell is an unapologetic disrupter, having spent over three decades pushing the tech industry's boundaries well past innovative design and technologies into the realm of true breakthroughs.

Today, many of those breakthroughs are embedded in our everyday lives – Apple's stylized Font menu (1984), pioneering 3D work on the original Metaverse (1995), and most significantly, inventing Adobe Acrobat's PDF (1990) – which Pell hacked together in a matter of days, bridging what was considered at the time the great insurmountable tech divide between Apple and Microsoft.

As one of the industry's most dynamic presenters, Pell delivers impactful and entertaining talks on today's most important topics—such as the nature of True Innovation, the Metaverse, AI and Mixed Reality, and Notes from the Future of Business.

Pell's unique approach to the work of rapidly bringing new ideas to life gave rise to his "Fast Design" methodology— an easily taught set of innovation principles used by teams around the world.

Widely recognized as a world-class designer and prolific thought leader, Pell currently leads The Microsoft Garage in New York City, part of the company's worldwide innovation program for moving ideas forward quickly to foster a culture of experimentation. An attractor for the city's brightest minds and bravest explorers, this unique space designed by Pell,

enables a new kind of envisioning and rapid prototyping to turn promising ideas into reality, every day.

Pell's first book, *Envisioning Holograms* (2017) is considered a must-have for tomorrow's most influential storytellers and explorers. His second book *The Age of Smart Information* (2019) details how the fundamental nature of communication is transforming with the combination of AI and Metaverse technologies. Mike's third book, *Visualizing Business* (2022), shows our most complex and dynamic businesses in an entirely new light.



AMY  
ALBERTSON

Amy Albertson is a Jewish advocate, educator, and influencer from California who is proudly and loudly uplifting Jewish diversity, reclaiming Zionism and fighting antisemitism through social media content, public speaking, consulting, and more.

While living in Israel for 6 years, she created "The Asian Israeli" where she cataloged her experiences as a Chinese-American Jewish woman. This exploration of her own identity and relationship with Israel led her to the work she does today.

Amy has been an active voice in the Jewish community for over a decade, since her days as the President of Hillel and Co-Founder of the Israel group on campus at Portland State University. After college, she completed an internship in Tel Aviv on a Masa Israel program. In 2015 she made Aliyah, where she dedicated her career to working for Jewish nonprofits.

Amy is the recipient of the Women's International Zionist Organization (WIZO) Warrior for Israel Award and was named

as one of *Hadassah Magazine's* "18 American Zionist Women You Should Know" in 2023. She has been published in *The Times of Israel*, *Hey Alma*, and the *Jewish Journal*, as well as being featured in the *Jerusalem Post*, the *Algemeiner*, JTA and on numerous podcasts. She is also highlighted in the book *Jewish Pride: Rebuilding a People*, by Ben M. Freeman. Currently, she works as a consultant with various Jewish & pro-Israel organizations. She is a member of Israeli President Herzog's inaugural Voice of the People Council. Amy is also an Executive Board Member of Be'Chol Lashon, an Associate with The Tel Aviv Institute, and a member of the Advisory Council of the JCRC Bay Area.

Amy loves the beach, being a dog mom, and doing her best to make everyone laugh at all times. Follow her on Instagram, Tiktok, and X: @theamyalbertson.



MELANIE  
MARON PELL

As AJC Chief Field Operations Officer, Melanie Maron Pell oversees AJC's network of 25 regional offices. She was previously AJC Associate Director of Regional Offices and Director of Regional Engagement. In that role, Pell worked to expand AJC's presence in communities across the U.S. and coordinated several successful agency-wide advocacy campaigns, including the Mayors United Against Antisemitism and the Governors United Against BDS initiatives. Prior to assuming her national role, Pell was Director of AJC Washington, D.C., where she oversaw all regional office activities and represented AJC in a variety of diplomatic, civic, and intergroup settings. Pell joined AJC in 2001 as Assistant Director of AJC Chicago. Pell graduated with honors from the Chicago-Kent College of Law and magna cum laude from the University of Louisville.

## IN OUR TOWN: ANTISEMITISM AND SAN DIEGO JEWS



Yael  
B. RIDBERG

Yael B. Ridberg became the rabbi of Congregation Dor Hadash in 2010. A 1997 graduate of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College, Rabbi Ridberg served for two years as the first Marshall T. Meyer Rabbinic Fellow at Congregation B'nai Jeshurun in New York. From 1998–2010, Rabbi Ridberg served for 12 years as a rabbi at West End Synagogue, in NYC; three years as the associate rabbi before becoming the sole rabbi of that congregation.

An active lay leader in Jewish communal life, Rabbi Ridberg serves on the *Avodah: the Jewish Service Corps* Advisory Council, served on the Board of Trustees at the San Diego Jewish Academy for 10 years, including two as President. She is also a Past President of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association and served on the Board of Jewish Family Service of San Diego. Rabbi Ridberg is a member of the San Diego Rabbinic Association, and she is engaged in multi-faith justice work whenever possible.

A passionate teacher and advocate for Jewish engagement and social justice, Rabbi Ridberg is a sought-after teacher and lecturer for many Jewish organizations including Federation Young Leadership, Women's Philanthropy, The Melton Program, and the LFJCC Lecture Series.

Her writing has appeared in *Times of Israel*, *Huffington Post*, and *Kveller*, and Rabbi Ridberg is as an author and commentator for *The Guide to Jewish Reconstructionist Practice* series published by the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College and is a chapter author for the 2007 URJ publication, *Life, Faith and Cancer*.

She lives in La Jolla with her husband and four children.



DARREN  
SCHWARTZ

Darren Schwartz serves as the Chief Planning and Strategy Officer at the Jewish Federation of San Diego, where he plays a vital role in developing innovative strategies and partnerships to build and strengthen the Jewish community. With a focus on fostering connections and addressing pressing needs, Darren is committed to enhancing the well-being and resilience of the local and global Jewish population.

Recently, Darren led the groundbreaking *San Diego Jewish Community Study: A Blueprint for our Future*. This comprehensive study offers invaluable insights into the composition, priorities, and challenges of the San Diego Jewish community. It highlights areas of strength while shedding light on critical issues such as antisemitism and Jewish hatred, serving as a guidepost for impactful community planning.

In addition to spearheading this initiative, Darren oversees the Federation's core programs, addressing essential areas like poverty alleviation, leadership development, community security, and global Jewish peoplehood. His work reflects a holistic approach to ensuring the vitality and safety of the Jewish community, both locally and internationally.

A dedicated strategist and advocate, Darren is passionate about creating a vibrant, inclusive future for the Jewish people. Through his leadership and vision, he continues to shape programs and partnerships that make a lasting difference.

## COLLEGE CAMPUSES: HOTBEDS FOR HATE OR OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE FUTURE?



RICHARD  
LEIB

Richard Leib is a member of the Board of Regents of the University of California. He was appointed to the Board in August, 2018 by Governor Jerry Brown for a term ending in 2026.

Rich is president and CEO of Dunleer Strategies, a San Diego-based consulting firm that works with emerging companies to develop strategies to help them meet short and long-term business goals. Prior to Dunleer, he spent 15 years as executive vice president and general counsel for Liquid Environmental Solutions, a company he co-founded and helped grow into the leading non-hazardous liquid waste recycling company in the U.S. The company, which ultimately employed 700 people, was sold to a private equity firm in 2017.

Prior to his work with Liquid Environmental Solutions, Mr. Leib served as executive vice president and general counsel of U.S. Public Technologies; and co-founded the investment management group at Stone and Youngberg, California's leading municipal debt underwriter.

Mr. Leib started his career working on the staff of state Senators Gary Hart and Herschel Rosenthal and he also worked for Congressmen Henry Waxman and Mel Levine.

He served on the Solana Beach School Board from 2008 until 2020, serving as Board President for two years. He previously served on the Community College Board of Governors from 1999–2005 and served as President of the Board from 2001–2003, as an appointee of Governor Gray Davis. He currently serves on the Board of the Steinberg Institute, a Sacramento



based organization that seeks to raise the profile and increase the effectiveness of mental health policy-making in California and the Board of Telecare, an organization dedicated to providing excellent behavior health services to people with complex needs. He also serves on the Board of Directors for the North Coast Repertory Theatre.

Mr. Leib's education includes a J.D. from the Loyola University School of Law, an M.A. from Claremont Graduate School, a Fellowship with the Coro Foundation, and a B.A. from UC Santa Barbara.



KAREN  
PARRY

Karen Parry is the Executive Director of Hillel of San Diego- a multi-campus Hillel that supports Jewish life at UCSD, SDSU, Cal State San Marcos, and USD. Within her tenure, Hillel of San Diego has closed an \$18M capital campaign, opened the Beverly and Joseph Glickman Hillel Center adjacent to UCSD, doubled the amount of students served, doubled the staff size, and exponentially expanded Hillel's resources and services provided. This year, Hillel of San Diego was awarded the Philip H. and Susan Rudd Cohen Outstanding Campus Award for their achievements in empowering student leadership and making the most significant growth and impact engaging Jewish students.

Karen has nearly two decades of community building experience. Previously, she served as the Development Director of the Jewish Federation of Greater Seattle. As a San Diego native, Karen was the Education Director at Temple Adat Shalom and got her start in Jewish engagement as the Teen Director, JCC Maccabi Games Delegation Head,

and Assistant Camp Jaycee Director at the Lawrence Family Jewish Community Center, Jacobs Family Campus. Karen is also an alum of the Wexner Field Fellowship, JCCA Merrin Teen Professionals Fellowship, and served as part of URJ's Community of Practice in Congregational Education. When not supporting Jewish life, you can find Karen playing with her daughters, husband, and their beagle.... preferably at the beach.



JACOB  
RENDLER

Jacob Rendler is a fourth-year student at UC San Diego, majoring in Human Biology on the medical track. Born to two Israeli parents and raised in San Diego, he has always been an active member of the local Jewish community through his Synagogue Chabad of Poway and attending the San Diego Jewish Academy.

As a current leader of Tritons for Israel, a student activist group dedicated to fostering dialogue, understanding, and support for Israel on campus, Jacob has been involved in advocacy for the Jewish and Israeli community and combatting antisemitism and anti-Zionism at UCSD.

His deep connection to both his Israeli-American heritage and the broader Jewish community continues to inspire his work, fighting Jew-hatred and cultivating respect for the Jewish and Israeli community on campus and around the world.

## PRACTICING ALLYSHIP



DR. ADELA  
DE LA TORRE

Dr. Adela de la Torre became the 9th president of San Diego State University in 2018, following a distinguished career of more than three decades as an accomplished economist, public-health researcher and higher-education leader in both California and Arizona. She is the first Chicana and first woman to serve as the president of the university.

Under President de la Torre's leadership, the breadth, depth and diversity of curriculum and academic programs at SDSU have all greatly improved. Furthering its ascendance as one of the nation's leading research universities, SDSU received a record-breaking \$230 million in research grants and contracts in 2024. And with a proud and active alumni network of more than half a million, the university has received \$650 million in gifts during the last five years of her presidency. President de la Torre brought to SDSU a global perspective and a mission of building on the university's unique leadership role in bridging the San Diego region's and the world's diverse communities, launching a 5-year strategic plan to grow the multi-location university's research enterprise and global presence and impact. President de la Torre's student-centric strategy focuses on driving student opportunity and success through university growth and resiliency, while emphasizing equity, access, sustainability and community engagement.

Under President de la Torre's leadership, the university has set new records in enrollment and national rankings, now serving nearly 40,000 students each year. It also has reached new heights and broken records with its athletic success, regional expansion, economic and community impact. Among the notable achievements, development of the mixed-use SDSU

Mission Valley – with a new stadium, 1.6 million square foot Innovation District and 80 acres of open space – remains on schedule. Additionally, a new \$80 million STEM facility at SDSU Imperial Valley is scheduled to open its doors to the regions first STEM students in 2025, and construction is beginning to add nearly 4,500 new student beds across both San Diego and Imperial Counties. Student access, success and social mobility have soared, while nearly eliminating achievement gaps for underrepresented, first-generation and financially disadvantaged students.



NICOLE  
MURRAY RAMIREZ

Nicole Murray Ramirez is a native Californian who has dedicated over 45 years of his life to the Latino community, the LGBT community, public service and social justice for all people. He has also been a charity and nonprofit fundraiser and leader in raising funds and awareness for those in need for over 40 years as the Chairman of the International Court Council of the USA, Mexico and Canada.

In the 1980s, when the AIDS crisis was devastating the community, Nicole was one of the most outspoken critics of the city's lack of leadership on the issue. In 1987, he convinced the Pride Board to allow him to speak at the rally and make an appeal to the crowd for a march on city hall to protest the city's lack of funding for HIV/AIDS programs.

Nicole has also been often honored in the Pride marches and parades, often serving as Grand Marshal or another place of honor in the parade and in 1994 received a Lifetime Achievement award for his contributions to Pride. Additionally, he can often be seen at one of the reviewing stands, announcing the passing parade contingents to the crowd.



**MICHAEL LOVETTE-  
COLYER, PhD**

Michael Lovette-Colyer, PhD, began his service as Vice President for Mission Integration on July 1, 2021. As Vice President, Dr. Lovette-Colyer leads the division of Mission Integration in its work of collaborating with all members of the university community to weave the mission, vision and values of the institution into every aspect of campus life.

Dr. Lovette-Colyer joined the USD community in 2007 as the Director of University Ministry and in 2011 he was promoted to Assistant Vice President of Mission and Ministry. Under his capable leadership the University Ministry team focused on creating dynamic faith formation opportunities that speak to the questions, interests and needs of millennial and generation Z students. Moreover, Michael greatly enhanced the university's immersion and community engagement offerings, especially through partnerships in San Diego and Tijuana. He has collaborated with many departments across campus and served on various university-wide committees all of which have helped to elevate USD's Catholic identity. Examples of this service include his service on the Envisioning 2024 Steering Committee and his service as a co-chair of the Student Success Committee.

Dr. Lovette-Colyer earned his undergraduate degree from John Carroll University, a Master of Divinity degree from the Jesuit School of Theology, a Master of Business Administration degree from Santa Clara University and his PhD from the University of San Diego. For many years, he served as an adjunct faculty member in USD's Department of Theology and Religious Studies teaching Introduction to Catholic Theology. In recent semesters, Michael has taught graduate courses in the School of Leadership and Educational Sciences including Leadership and Organizational Change, Leadership and Spirituality and Ethical Leadership for Global Social Justice.

Prior to joining USD, Dr. Lovette-Colyer worked at Santa Clara University from 2001–2007 where he held positions as Associate Campus Minister, Program Manager for Faith and Justice Education, and Associate Director in the Ignatian Center for Jesuit Education. He has also served as a resident minister at the University of San Francisco and as a case worker for Casa Del Migrante in Tijuana, Mexico. Prior to starting his professional career in higher education, he dedicated a year to full-time volunteer service through the Jesuit Volunteer Corps.

In addition to his work on campus, Dr. Lovette-Colyer is as a member of the corporate board of Catholic Charities of the Diocese of San Diego, the board of the Catholic Campus Ministry Association and the Parent-Teacher Association of his daughter's school where he also serves as the pee-wee soccer coach.

## TEEN TRACK



**KELSEY  
GREENBERG YOUNG**

Kelsey Greenberg Young (she/her) has been dedicated to fighting antisemitism and all forms of bias in the San Diego community since 2016. As the previous Education Director for the San Diego ADL, Kelsey worked tirelessly alongside parents and educators to challenge bias and bullying in k-12 schools via interactive programming, school-wide initiatives, and mentorship of student leaders. Since 2022, she has largely focused on crafting and facilitating activities to empower students and educators to combat antisemitism and is the proud co-facilitator of AJC's 2024–2025 Leaders for Tomorrow program.

Kelsey graduated with her B.A. in Communication from the University of California, Santa Barbara and previously worked as the community and project manager for multiple San Diego mobile app companies. As a proud patrilineal Jew, Kelsey believes in educating about the diversity of the Jewish community, advocating for the warm welcome of interfaith Jewish families, and cultivating antisemitism education through an anti-bias lens. She stays grounded through teaching and practicing yoga, hiking with her dog and husband, and reading as many books as she can.



RONNIE  
VOLMAN

Ronnie Volman is a second-year student at the University of California, San Diego, studying Economics and Cognitive Science. A proud Israeli-American, she is deeply passionate about Jewish advocacy and strengthening connections between the Jewish community and Israel.

On campus, Ronnie is actively involved with Hillel and serves as the Director of Public Relations for Tritons for Israel, where she works to promote understanding and collaboration among students. Beyond campus, she represents her community as a member of AJC's Campus Global Board and JPAC's Campus Council, advocating for policies and initiatives that support the Jewish community at home and worldwide.

Last year, she served as a First-Year Leadership Intern for StandWithUs, gaining valuable experience in community engagement and leadership.

In high school, Ronnie was a Peer Leaders Fellow with the Jewish Federation of San Diego, where she developed essential leadership skills that continue to guide her success in college.

Ronnie is committed to creating spaces where Jewish culture can be celebrated, fostering meaningful conversations about community and identity, and advocating for a strong, vibrant future for Jewish life worldwide. Through her work on and off campus, she seeks to empower students and ensure the Jewish community remains united, resilient, and thriving.





ALISSA  
BERNSTEIN

Alissa Bernstein is the Assistant Director of AJC Los Angeles, where she manages the region's political outreach and legislative advocacy and interfaith and intergroup coalition building. In her role, she is responsible for deepening and expanding the office's political relationships on a local, State and Federal level and supporting ordinances which protect and empower the Jewish community and Israel. Alissa is dedicated to reaching outside of the Jewish community to build bridges with other cultural and religious groups in the region, including the Black, Latino, AAPI, LGBTQ+, Indian, and many other communities. She is passionate about fighting antisemitism at home and abroad through education, policy, and long-term relationship building.



SOPHIE  
HARRIS

Sophie Harris is a San Diego native who attended Congregation Beth Am for preschool, Hebrew School, and Bat Mitzvah. After graduating high school in 2020, she spent a gap year in Israel, where she fell in love with the country, its culture, and its people, and decided to settle in Tel Aviv. Sophie began sharing her love and passion for Israel and Judaism on TikTok, creating a popular account called AmericanInIsrael, which has more than 46K followers. Sophie was inspired to create a community in Tel Aviv to bring young Jewish women together which she called "Hot Girls Do Shabbat", that has evolved into a movement dedicated to spreading Jewish joy and keeping Jewish traditions alive in creative and unique ways. Hot Girls Do Shabbat has an international following, and has held events in Israel, London, New York, and San Diego, with more cities in the works! Sophie has collaborated with many organizations inside and outside of Israel including StandWithUs, Operation Gratitude (which supports Israeli soldiers), Lost Tribe, DiploAct, Israel Is, and more. She is passionate about fostering Jewish pride, and showing young Jews how "cool" and fun it is to be Jewish. For more information about Sophie and Hot Girls Do Shabbat, visit @hotgirlsdoshabbat or @sophie\_hariis on Instagram, and @AmericanInIsrael on TikTok.

# CLOSING PLENARY SPEAKER



JOHN  
ONDRASIK

John Ondrasik is a Grammy-nominated singer and songwriter, also known as Five for Fighting. Last year, John released the song, "OK (We Are Not Ok)," about the October 7, 2023, Hamas-perpetrated terror attack, and the subsequent surge in antisemitism both in the United States and around the world. John performed "OK" and his hit song "Superman (It's Not Easy)" April 13th at Hostage Square in Tel Aviv.

Ondrasik has penned major hits, including the chart-topping "100 Years," "The Riddle," "Chances," "World," and "Easy Tonight," which have earned over one billion streams and place him as a top-10 Hot Adult Contemporary artist for the 2000s. The reflective "100 Years" has joined "Superman (It's Not Easy)" as part of the American Songbook and continues to stand the test of time at weddings, birthdays, graduations, memorials, and many a home video. Five For Fighting's music has also been featured in more than 350 films, television shows, and commercials, including the Oscar-winning *The Blind Side*, *Hawaii Five-O*, *The Sopranos* and the CBS drama, *Code Black*.

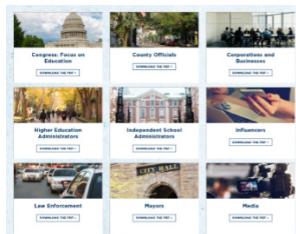
# RESOURCES



AJC's glossary of terms in English and Spanish  
[www.ajc.org/translatehate](http://www.ajc.org/translatehate)



AJC's State of Antisemitism in America 2023 Report  
[www.ajc.org/AntisemitismReport2023](http://www.ajc.org/AntisemitismReport2023)



AJC 's Guides for American on Countering Antisemitism  
[www.ajc.org/guides](http://www.ajc.org/guides)

# COMMUNITY PARTNERS



THE BUTTERFLY PROJECT.  
Remembrance & Hope



COMMUNITY JEWISH HIGH SAN DIEGO



Congregation Beth Am  
בית עם



Hillel San Diego



KEN JEWISH COMMUNITY



# AJC GLOBAL FORUM 2025 RETURNS TO NEW YORK CITY!

## Will you be in the room?

Mark your calendars! From **April 27-29, 2025**, join American Jewish Committee (AJC) and over 2,000 committed activists at the premier global Jewish advocacy conference of the year. At AJC Global Forum, we'll tackle the critical issues facing the Jewish people, Israel, America, and the world.

### OUR PROGRAM WILL FEATURE:

- Large plenary sessions with headline speakers.
- Smaller breakout sessions designed to explore the key political, strategic, and social concerns affecting Israel and the global Jewish community.
- Exclusive opportunities to engage with diplomats, decision-makers, interfaith partners, community leaders, and more.

**REGISTER TODAY!**  
**JOIN AJC IN SHAPING A NEW FUTURE.**



NEW YORK CITY | APRIL 27-29  
[AJC.org/GlobalForum2025](https://www.ajc.org/GlobalForum2025)  
Contact: [globalforum@ajc.org](mailto:globalforum@ajc.org)





# STANDING TOGETHER

A Community  
Response to  
Antisemitism

**AJC** San Diego



Jewish Federation  
of San Diego

February 2, 2025  
Hilton Bayfront Hotel

INSPIRING • EDUCATING • ACTIVATING

**AJC** San Diego

[www.ajc.org/sandiego](http://www.ajc.org/sandiego)