

2020 BRONFMAN FELLOWS



Max Bamberger
Berkeley, CA

Max Bamberger is a junior at the Jewish Community High School in San Francisco. He is the Co-Editor of his school's literary magazine, *The*

Howl, in which he writes with a focus on retelling ancient Jewish stories and archetypes through modern settings, struggles, and narrators. In addition, he is Assistant Editor of his school's student news source, *The JCHS Observer*, and has contributed on multiple occasions to *The Jewish News of Northern California*. Max has played leading roles in three JCHS musical productions. He spent three summers at Kayitz BaKibbutz Shluchot summer camp in Israel and has interned at small media organizations for the past two summers. In the summer of 2018, Max worked at BimBam (formerly G-dcast), a Jewish digital storytelling and education nonprofit based in Oakland, as a production assistant for their Jewish history series and for *Shaboom!*, their kids' series. In the summer of 2019, he served as the first-ever intern for Koolulam (based in Tel Aviv), a social-musical initiative aimed at strengthening the fabric of society through mass-singing events and online videos. At JCHS, Max's studies have included Hebrew Literature, Advanced Bible and Commentary, American History, Computer Science, and Advanced Physics, and Max is currently enrolled in independent studies for Music Theory, Multivariable Calculus, and Second-Year Arabic. Max is a member of the first JCHS Rock Climbing team and, in his free time, he likes to play guitar and Ultimate Frisbee (though rarely simultaneously). He and his four younger siblings were raised in the multi-generational Modern Orthodox community of Berkeley's Congregation Beth Israel.



Ava Berkwits
Chicago, IL

Ava Berkwits is a junior at Walter Payton College Prep in Chicago, where she can often be found in the midst of spirited political discussion or rehearsing a

musical production. She pursues her love for singing and musical theater as part of Payton's treble-voice acapella group, its musical theater program, and its concert choir, and she is a member of the school's Model United Nations team where she has learned the value of diplomacy and discussion in problem-solving. Ava is passionate about social justice and is an organizer with Illinois Youth Climate Strike, a youth-led organization intended to bring awareness and action to the climate crisis. Last year, Ava was a recipient of the Rising Voices Fellowship through the Jewish Women's Archive, a writing program where she explored her Feminist and Jewish identities and met other Feminist teens from across the country. She spent the summer of 2019 studying Jewish ideas and Western thought at the Tikvah Fund's Maimonides Scholars Program, and Jewish vocal arts at Brandeis University's BIMA program. Ava attends Anshe Emet Synagogue, a Conservative synagogue in her neighborhood where she is current president of the local USY chapter and leads toddler Shabbat services. Ava is the loving sister to a cavapoo named Suki and a human named Talia.

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Joshua Bock
Scarsdale, NY

Josh Bock is a junior at Scarsdale High School and a member of Westchester Reform Temple, where he participates in a Torah study program called The Rabbi's Table. He has played hockey since kindergarten and is the captain of the varsity hockey team at Scarsdale High School. He also volunteers as a coach for the New York Raptors Special Hockey Team, an organization that allows children and adults with developmental disabilities to experience the game of hockey. An enthusiastic fan (and self-proclaimed writer) of comedy, Josh is the satire writer for his school's magazine, *Maroon*, for which he is also the opinion editor. He is greatly looking forward to an inspiring and enlightening summer with the Bronfman Fellowship.

understanding of prayer to students in the Berman Lower School, Tal acts as a davening leader for first and second graders. Because of her deep connection with tefilla, Tal can be found on Shabbat mornings at the Kemp Mill Synagogue Youth Minyan, sometimes giving Divrei Torah after services. Tal is a left-brain/right-brain person who loves physics and biology as well as painting and poetry. She was recognized in the 2019 Berman Art Show for her oil paintings and attended Jump Start at the University of Maryland, a biomedical sciences summer program. Most of the activities that Tal takes part in boil down to her love of learning. Tal constantly wants to ask more questions and truly understand everything, often to the consternation of her teachers. Deeply invested in her Judaism and the Jewish people, Tal looks forward to expanding her worldview and understanding of religion as well as forming life-long friendships with the incredible group of fellows this summer



Tal Bresler
Silver Spring, MD

Tal Bresler is a junior at the Melvin J. Berman Hebrew Academy, a Modern Orthodox Jewish day school. As the head of Berman's Israel Action Committee, a member of Berman's Politics Club, and a member of Berman's Girl Up Club, political activism is a high priority for Tal. She was privileged to attend the AIPAC Policy Conference on her school delegation for the past two years. Another priority for Tal is community service. Tal founded and co-heads Berman's chapter of Learn To Be (LTB), a national online tutoring organization that works with underserved students. As a tutor with LTB for three years and a member of its Junior Board, Tal strives to help kids struggling with their education. Working to convey a love and



Laila Brustin
Nashville, TN

Laila Brustin is a rising senior at Nashville School of the Arts. At school she participates in the Thespian and National Honor Societies. For the past three years she has been an active leader in the pluralistic LGBTQ+ Jewish youth program, Keshet, based out of Boston, MA. At home in Nashville, Laila volunteers at the Tennessee Holocaust Commission, fosters dogs for the Nashville Humane Association, and works part-time at a local theater. During her regular visits to Los

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Angeles to visit family, she volunteers with Project Angel Food preparing meals for people affected by severe diseases. In her free time she loves to knit and embroider gifts for her friends and family and play the drums. Laila is honored and excited to be a part of the Bronfman Fellowship.



Connor Cairns
Glassboro, NJ

Connor Cairns is an honor student at Glassboro High School in Glassboro, NJ. He is a member of the high school tennis team, Philosophy Club, Tri-M Honor Society, Concert Band, Brassboro, and Pit Orchestra. Connor is also a member of the award-winning GHS Marching Band and Jazz Band. He is actively involved in community service and has been an advocate for military families nationally.



Devorah Feder
Sharon, MA

Devorah Feder is a junior at Maimonides School, an Orthodox institution with a dual curriculum, in Brookline, MA. Prior to Maimonides, Devorah attended Striar Hebrew Academy of Sharon. She has been the Senior Editor of her school's literary magazine since sophomore year. As a senior, Devorah will be the captain of her school's Model UN team, for which she won an Honorable Mention at this past year's Yeshiva University Model UN conference. Pursuant to her interest in the halachik process, Devorah is a founder and captain of the Maimonides Moot Beit Din team, which won second place in their division last

year. Outside of academics, Devorah devotes much of her time to playing for the Maimonides varsity tennis team and varsity basketball team, which won Shalhevet's 5th Annual Glouberman Tournament, the Maimonides Invitational Tournament, and played in the MIAA Division IV State Tournament Semi-Finals this past season. Devorah also enjoys painting and has taken many art classes over the years. She belongs to the Young Israel of Sharon synagogue and proudly partakes in their women's davening services. Devorah is passionate about creating religious opportunities for women, and she spearheaded a women's davening group last year at Maimonides and teaches davening to sixth-grade girls this year. Devorah has spent her summers studying Jewish texts at Drisha's Dr. Beth Samuels High School program, exploring Israel as a Diller Teen Fellow, and volunteering at the Rosie's Place shelter.



David Hidary
Brooklyn, NY

David Hidary is a junior at the Yeshivah of Flatbush Joel Braverman High School, and is an aspiring physicist and quantum engineer. Since 2016 David has been taking summer programming courses at Monmouth and Princeton University, developing skills in Java, C#, Python, and Artificial Intelligence. He has also taken an introductory physics course at Columbia University. This past summer David worked for senior research scientist Dr. Ray Lee at Columbia University's Zuckerman Mind Brain Behavior Institute. Dr. Lee specializes in fMRI research and is revolutionizing the dual head fMRI to study human interaction and our cognitive connections. David worked on the programming and computational side of Dr. Lee's research assisting in providing stimuli to subjects and modeling brain networks with machine learning. David is involved in many clubs, from AIPAC to the math team. He is the

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president of the astronomy club, captain of the model United Nations team, founder of the world politics commission, and founder of fossils and faith- a club that aims to resolve contradictions between the bible and modern science. David is also a proficient jazz pianist studying the works of John Coltrane, Miles David, Bill Evans, and many other greats. It's clear that David is improvising a new tune for life, and we'll just have to wait for what note comes next.



Myriam Joseph-Schilz
Silver Spring, MD

Myriam Joseph-Schilz is a junior at the Washington Waldorf School, which she has attended since fourth grade. Besides engaging with the rigorous academic curriculum, she pursues some of her special interests: the arts, such as bookmaking, printmaking, or weaving; West African drumming; and the German language. She has also been a member of the high school newspaper since freshman year, writing on topics such as "Accessibility vs. Inclusivity," "Cyntoia Brown: What Really Happened?," and "How to Get Involved in Elections (As Youth)." Myriam's deepest passion is working with horses. She started riding at Rock Creek Park Horse Center when she was eight and now works there, teaching young children on horseback. Myriam is also currently a member of a show team. In her spare time, she loves to bake and experiment with various recipes. Myriam prides herself on being Deaf, and fondly remembers her two years at Kendall Demonstration Elementary School and being part of a vibrant Deaf community there. Myriam considers herself culturally Jewish, and came to strongly appreciate the studying, questioning, and dialogue aspects of Judaism while attending Sunday school and going through her bat

mitzvah at the Jewish Renewal congregation Kehila Chadasha. Although currently not an active member of a congregation, she is looking forward to redefining her Jewish identity through the Fellowship and engaging in Jewish discourse in the year(s) to come.



Ryan Kassanoff
Dallas, TX

Ryan Kassanoff is a junior at Shelton School. He, along with his brother and one of their friends, created the Inclusion Club, which promotes inclusion, awareness, and diversity. Ryan also serves as the Vice President of Appreciation in his school government, promoting a sense of appreciation for those who help us around school and in life, including security guards, cafeteria workers, teachers, and many others. Outside of school, Ryan dedicates his time to causes Jewish and secular. He is on the regional board of his BBYO region, North Texas Oklahoma Region, where he serves as the Judaic and Community Service Vice President. Ryan is also part of the American Jewish Committee's Leaders for Tomorrow Cohort, serves as the Temple Emanu-El Vice President of Social Justice, and as a Madrichim for Kindergarteners. Ryan is heavily involved in AIPAC, working to promote a strong relationship between the United States and Israel, attending AIPAC's Policy Conference, High School Summit, and the Saban Leadership Seminar as a high school delegate. Outside of Jewish organizations, Ryan is involved in TeenAgeCommunicationTheatre (TACT), a community service acting troupe through Planned Parenthood. Ryan and his troupe provide peer-to-peer outreach on issues important to teens such as sexually transmitted infections, alcohol, dating violence, and much more. Ryan has a strong interest in politics and wants to work on a political campaign when he is older. In his free time, Ryan likes to spend

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time with his other two siblings, his three dogs, and his family!



Samuel Libenson
Chicago, IL

Sam Libenson is a junior at Kenwood Academy High School in Chicago, IL, which he has attended since 7th grade. He attended Akiba Schechter Jewish Day School in Hyde

Park through 6th grade. Sam is the president of his school's chapter of Best Buddies, an international organization that promotes friendship between students in general education and students with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities, and he is a member of the Illinois Best Buddies 5 Star School Team, working closely with Best Buddies Illinois on statewide activities and administration. Through the 5 Star School Team, Sam is beginning a project on the intersections of race and ability in America, specifically focusing on the significantly different, yet largely ignored, experiences of individuals and families affected by intellectual/developmental disability in minority communities. Sam is also the captain of the Kenwood Academy policy debate team, a member of the math team, and a member of the National Honor Society. He will be the president of his school's Jewish Student Connection next year. Outside of school, Sam has been doing ballet and modern dance for 14 years at the Hyde Park School of Dance, where he is a member of the youth company, Tyego Next Generation. He has performed in *The Nutcracker*, *The Nightingale*, *Cinderella*, dances adapted from "The Wiz," and more. Additionally, Sam co-teaches a ballet class for boys under 12. For the past two summers, Sam received a full scholarship from the Chicago Debate League to attend the Northwestern Debate Institute, where he has researched and debated topics including immigration and international arms sales policy. Sam enjoys

reading (with a particular emphasis on science fiction), watching "Survivor" on Wednesday nights, and playing with his dog, Pointer.



Cara Lopatin
Huntington Woods, MI

Cara Lopatin is in 11th grade at Farber Hebrew Day School where she is a member of the National Honor Society. She moved with her family from Riverdale, New York

to Huntington Woods last summer. Cara has an older sister and two younger brothers. Her father is the rabbi of Kehillat Etz Chayim, and she and her family are very involved in the synagogue. Cara is involved in Bnei Akiva and Friendship Circle in Detroit, and this year she played on the Farber varsity girls' basketball team. Cara is also a board member of the Jewish Fund Teen Board, which she is enjoying. Every year, Cara and her family go to Miami to participate in the Miami half marathon as part of Team Cara, which is part of Team Lifeline (Chai Lifeline). Cara volunteered with Summer in the City, where she had her hair braided multiple times each day by the campers. Cara loves doing puzzles and playing games with her family, and she loves almost anything Disney. Cara is looking forward to being a Bronfman fellow this summer!



Imogen Lubin
Princeton, NJ

Imogen Lubin is a junior at West-Windsor Plainsboro High School North in Plainsboro, New Jersey. Passionate about writing and design, Imogen is currently the senior opinion editor of her school's newspaper, *The Knightly News*, and the Editor-In-Chief of the

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yearbook. She is also a co-president of her film club and is a member of the School Climate team, which focuses on creating a more inclusive learning environment. Outside of school, Imogen volunteers for HiTOPS—a non-profit organization in Princeton, NJ—where she educates her peers on topics such as identity and expression, sex, sexual harassment, and healthy relationships. Although enthusiastic about Judaism, especially its history of social activism, Imogen has little formal Jewish education and does not belong to any Jewish organizations. She looks forward to expanding her Jewish learning during the Bronfman fellowship year and beyond.



Max Miller
Brooklyn, NY

Max Miller is a junior at The Beacon School in New York City, where he is involved in the music program. A saxophone player, he has had the opportunity to perform

at NYC venues including Carnegie Hall, Radio City Music Hall, Jazz at Lincoln Center, Town Hall and The Bitter End. A Jazz at Lincoln Center Youth Big Band member, Max also plays saxophone during Shabbat services at his synagogue, Congregation Beth Elohim, and helped raise money for Coalition for the Homeless by participating in a Kids Rock for Kids benefit concert. An editor and occasional writer for Genius.com, Max won the music site's Best Annotation of 2018. Additionally, he has worked for the MTA and volunteered at Celebrate Brooklyn, Prospect Park's summer music festival, and the Lenox Hill Neighborhood House, where he advocated for elderly and disabled public-housing residents in Harlem. He enjoys playing baseball and soccer and was ranked tenth best novice debater in New York City. Max is excited to learn more about his Jewish identity this summer.



Oren Minsk
Chevy Chase, MD

Oren Minsk is a junior at the Charles E. Smith Jewish Day School where he has been a student since kindergarten, and is the fourth generation

of his family to be a member of B'nai Israel Congregation. Oren was a camper at Camp Ramah in New England for eight years. At school, he is a minyan leader for younger students, helping to lead prayer services and plan activities. He is a captain of his school's cross country and track and field teams and specializes in longer distances. Oren serves as Co-Editor-in-Chief of his school's newspaper, the *Lion's Tale*, is a member of the debate team, and is vice-president of his Junior State of America chapter, where he enjoys discussing and debating politics with students from across the Mid-Atlantic. Oren is a volunteer at Friendship Circle, spending time weekly with a pre-teen buddy with special needs.



Kate Orlanski
Beverly Hills, CA

Kate Orlanski is a junior at Shalhevet High School, a co-ed Modern Orthodox school in Los Angeles, California, where she is

involved in a variety of teams and clubs. Kate founded and co-chairs her school's chapter of

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Young Americans for Freedom, which is a conservative political club. She has hosted Ben Shapiro, Dennis Prager and Will Witt, and other distinguished speakers; and has held meetings about 2nd Amendment rights, feminism, capitalism, and more. A passionate defender of Israel, Kate is committed to Israel's security and future as a thriving Jewish state. Kate is also an active member of her school's student council, known as The Agenda Committee, where she has served as Secretary throughout her sophomore year as well as Vice-Chair throughout her junior year. As Vice-Chair, she has contributed to, as well as presented at school-wide assemblies regarding a variety of ethical issues, often from a Jewish perspective. Kate has been writing for her school's newspaper, *The Shalhevet Boiling Point*, since freshman year, and has assumed the role of Features Editor since her junior year. Kate enjoys writing feature stories on topics that her peers can relate to, including TikTok, an award-winning article on ASMR, and her personal favorite, an article examining the Kosher snack food industry. Among her co-curricular activities, Kate is particularly passionate about Model Congress. Kate joined the team freshman year and has since won multiple distinctions at the Princeton and Penn Model Congress, including three Honorable Mentions and one Best Delegate award.



Gideon Reiter
Woodbridge, CT

Gideon grew up and currently lives in Woodbridge, Connecticut. There, he attended Ezra Academy from kindergarten through eighth grade, prior to attending Choate Rosemary Hall, where he is currently a junior. This year, Gideon received first place in the Choate Arabic Poetry Contest and will be representing his Arabic class in the CT COLT

Poetry Recitation Contest. Gideon is also a member of B'nai Jacob's chapter of Hazamir: the International Jewish Teen Choir, with whom he has performed twice at Lincoln Center. Gideon is thrilled to participate in the Bronfman Fellowship this coming year.



Esther Rella Robinson
Cedarhurst, NY

Relly Robinson is a junior at Yeshiva University High School for Girls in Queens, NY. She grew up in an Orthodox community and has attended Orthodox schools and camps her whole life. She participates in her school's Model UN and Model Congress teams which help foster her interest in politics and world affairs. Her hobbies include taking the Long Island Railroad, signing petitions, reading, and eating overpriced food with her friends. Causes that she's passionate about include feminism and the March for Our Lives movement. She is ecstatic to have been chosen as a Bronfman Fellow and she can't wait to learn and be exposed to new ideologies and perspectives.



Marina Rosenthal
White Plains, NY

Marina Rosenthal, a junior at White Plains High School, is a member of Congregation Kol Ami where she is a co-social justice advisor for the temple youth group. At school, she is secretary of her student government as well as vice-president of the Global Ambassadors Club. As an executive committee member of the White Plains Community Youth Court, she works

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closely with local probation officers to defend juveniles in the justice system and helps determine sanctions for misdemeanors committed in her community. She enjoys writing and reading poetry and is the literary editor of the award-winning *Roar Magazine* at her school. With over 400 hours of community service, she received the Community Service Award from the New York Power Authority in 2019 and intends to maintain an active role in her community throughout high school and college. In her free time, she swims on the varsity level and enjoys being a part of the stage crew for her school's productions.



Eva Roytburg
Glencoe, IL

Eva Roytburg is a junior at New Trier High School in Winnetka, Illinois. At New Trier, she is an opinion's editor for the school newspaper, the *New Trier News*, and a varsity member of the policy debate team, competing nationally. A passionate political activist, Eva volunteers for Illinois congressmen Brad Schneider's campaign and helps organize fundraising events. She also organized and led her school's March for Our Lives walkout to protest gun violence. Eva belongs to Am Shalom, a reform Synagogue in her community. She hopes to deepen her understanding of her Jewish identity, in both religious and cultural contexts.



Hillel Schwab
Bronx, NY

Hillel Schwab lives in Riverdale, NY and attends SAR High School, a co-ed, Modern Orthodox day school. There he thoroughly enjoys his Judaic studies, Jewish philosophy, and Arabic classes. He is involved in his school's debate team, college bowl, Yachad club and Hebrew language journal, and serves on the school spirit student council. He also helped found and lead his school's first ever GSA this past year. Outside of school, Hillel has been performing with Riverdale Rising Stars, a local musical theater group, since he was in second grade. He also plays the guitar in his free time, both for fun and as a spiritual outlet. He is proud to call himself a Hebrew grammar nerd and a tekhelet-tying geek, as he is passionate about all areas of Judaism, from essential values to precious minutiae. Hillel is really excited to be a part of this truly special experience.



Andrew Shamailov
Staten Island, NY

Andrew Gavriel Shamailov is a student at Staten Island Technical high school. He is a Sephardic Jew and established his Judaic values through his grandfather, who was very involved in the Ditmas Avenue synagogue. Andrew aspires to be a neurosurgeon and has a very strong dedication to helping others. He has volunteered at nursing homes and tutors children with learning disabilities. He also wants to travel as a surgeon and go to countries that do not have the medical availability that other countries do. Andrew values learning and education greatly. He has attended Brown

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University's pre summer program for neurobiology, Weill Cornell Medicine's HPREP program, the HOBY leadership seminar, and other educational programs. His value on learning also branches into other sectors. Andrew is very musically oriented and identifies with it. He has been playing guitar since 2nd grade and started playing bass guitar when he entered 6th grade. Since then, he taught himself piano and is currently teaching himself drums. He is very heavily influenced and inspired by Kanye West, Kevin Parker, Frank Ocean, Earl Sweatshirt, Logic, Eminem, and others. He creates music in his free time, his favorite genres being R/B, Jazz, and Rap. He also loves cinema. His favorite movies are *La La Land* and *Inglorious Basterds*.



Daniel Shapiro
Albuquerque, NM

Daniel Shapiro is a junior at Albuquerque Academy, in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Daniel's interests range from mathematics to history, philosophy and

learning new languages. Daniel has been studying Japanese for four years, and last summer he went on a school exchange trip to Japan, where he attended a Japanese high school and lived with a host family. Daniel loves music and theater. He enjoys singing with the school's classical choral group, Academy Bel Canto, and he has been in a number of Academy's theatrical productions, including three musicals, his favorite by far being "Fiddler on the Roof." He plays both classical and electric guitar and is a member of the school's Honors Guitar Quartet. Daniel is on his school's track and cross-country teams, and he is also a member of the Mock Trial team. Daniel enjoys working with people and volunteering his time to help others, and he has been providing after-school tutoring to homeless children at local public schools by volunteering with the Title 1

Homeless Program. Daniel is the co-president of his school's Jewish Student Alliance, an extracurricular group founded last year. The group provides an opportunity for Jewish students to meet regularly and discuss various topics of interest or concern to the Jewish community. In his free time Daniel enjoys exploring new places, hiking, biking and spending time with his friends. He is very excited to be a Bronfman Fellow, and is looking forward to meeting all the other Fellows.



Leah Shvedova
Arlington, VA

Leah Shvedova is currently a junior at Washington-Liberty High School in Arlington, VA, a suburb of Washington, D.C. At Washington-Liberty,

Leah is enrolled in a full Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate program and thoroughly enjoys the rigor of her math, physics, and philosophy classes. Outside of school, Leah has been enrolled at Levine Music with a full scholarship studying classical piano under Darya Gabay for 11 years. In addition to playing classical piano, Leah has also founded a small classical piano school and enjoys her job immensely. In her Jewish life, Leah is an active member of BBYO and has served 6 terms on the executive board in her Chapter, as well as currently serving on the International Leadership Network. Through BBYO, Leah has attended many leadership conferences and has explored her spirituality and Judaism. Leah is incredibly excited to broaden her horizons and further her Jewish identity this year at the Bronfman Fellowship.

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Kyra Siegel
New York, NY

Kyra Siegel is a junior at Trinity School in New York City. There she plays on the varsity tennis team, competes with the Mock Trial team, participates in

theater productions, performs in an acapella group, and is co-president of The Jewish Affairs Club, The Girls Math Study Group, and The Baking Club. She is also photography editor of *The Trinity Times*. Kyra is always creating. She loves photography, mixed media art, writing songs and short stories, and acting. Kyra's family belongs to West End Synagogue and Anshe Chesed and she considers herself a non-denominational Jew.



Ruthie Weinbaum
Amherst, MA

Ruthie Weinbaum is a junior at Amherst Regional High School in Amherst, Massachusetts. She is an active

participant in the theater program, where she performed in the recent musical production of *Spring Awakening*, Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*, and festivals of one-act and student-written plays. She sings in the ARHS Chorale, as well as Western District and All-State Chorus. Ruthie dances at Amherst Ballet and plays the cello in the Springfield Symphony Youth Orchestra. For the past two years, she has appeared on television in the high school quiz show, *As Schools Match Wits*, competing as a member of the ARHS team. Ruthie's family has been active in Congregation B'nai Israel in Northampton since before she was born. Ruthie currently works as a tutor with students preparing for

their bar or bat mitzvah. Ruthie has been involved in social action for many years as well. She is co-President of the Women's Rights Club at her high school, where she has organized pad and tampon drives; and is working on creating "Consent Week," including five days of programming about healthy relationships, toxic masculinity, and #metoo. She has served as Social Action Chair and currently Jewish Life Chair of Chai, a Jewish youth group of the Pioneer Valley.
