

2021 Bronfman Fellow Introductions



Eleanor Bolker
Dover, NH
Phillips Exeter Academy

Fast Facts

- I host a radio show of literature read aloud on my school's radio station.
- I enjoy reading (English and German) and writing (just English for now :))
- I volunteer at a migratory bird banding station.

Hi! I'm Eleanor. I'm originally from Dover, NH, but I go to boarding school at Phillips Exeter Academy, so I live in Exeter, NH most of the year. I have an older brother, two cats, and myriad houseplants. In terms of Jewish identity, I'm Ashkenazi and from an interfaith household (my dad's dad is a retired Protestant minister). Since NH doesn't have many Jews, my Jewish communities mostly haven't been particularly long-lived. (Over the course of my life, I've been in two different Chavurot, one synagogue, and now PEA's Jewish community, in which I'm very active.) Because of this, I don't particularly identify with any denomination at this point in my life; much of my religious practice takes place on an individual or household level. However, I think in some ways coming from this background can also be a blessing, because it's made me very intentional in how I approach Jewish identity and practice. I definitely have more questions than answers, and I'm excited to explore them in such an engaged, pluralistic community at Bronfman!

By way of interests, I love English, math, physics, and German. My extracurricular interests are also a little eclectic; at school, I'm involved with the MLK Day Committee, the intersectional coalition, writing puzzles and organizing the annual Puzzlehunt, and the school radio station, among other things. Outside of school, I volunteer at a living history museum and a migratory bird banding station. My particular areas of nerdiness include birds, words, NPR, and local history. I also love the ocean, gardening,

parentheses, ice cream, late-night conversations (even though I'm a morning person), long walks, and the Beatles (George Harrison being the best one). My favorite books include *Autumn* by Ali Smith and *Mrs. Dalloway*. I'm currently watching *The Good Place*.



Katje Bulthuis
Logan, UT
Logan High School

Fast Facts

- In 2020, I was accepted as a fellow for the Congress Bundestag Youth Exchange, which was held online due to the pandemic.
- In 2019, I worked as an intern in my school's laboratory preschool.
- I have been acting since 2014, with an emphasis on Shakespeare and classical theatre.

Hi! My name is Katje and I'm a rising senior at Logan High School in Utah. At school, I participate in theatre productions, work as a tutor in the foreign language department, and am a member of the Environmental Club. In my spare time, I can be found walking my border collie Luna, playing my viola, or trying to make sense of German grammar.

I identify as a Reform Jew and am a passionate feminist. I enjoy reading and writing about the women of the Torah and like to write midrashic poetry. My favorite characters to write about are currently Eve and Lilith.

I thrive when I am surrounded by new experiences, learning opportunities, and people willing to discuss ideas and current events with me.

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Beverly Cohen
Los Angeles, CA
Marlborough School

Fast Facts

- I've been a hotline responder at Teen Line for three years.
- I attended the Iowa caucus as a student journalist. (I have a selfie with President Joe Biden.)
- I'm a member of the audition-only, advanced theater group Marlborough Ensemble Theater.

I'm Beverly and I was born and currently live in Los Angeles, CA. I identify as Modern Orthodox. I love to cook and bake (although not all my baking creations are edible). My academic interests are psychology, gender and political theory and environmental sciences. I am an avid reader and I just finished reading *Mrs. Dalloway* by Virginia Woolf. I love music, and my favorite artists are ABBA, Taylor Swift, and Phoebe Bridgers. I love theater - my favorite play is *Noises Off!* and my favorite musical is *Hadestown*. In my free time, I collage and attempt to try every vegan restaurant in L.A.



Jack Goodman
Chicago, IL
Walter Payton College Prep

Fast Facts

- I spend a lot of time writing poetry, short stories, and humor pieces, as well as working and workshopping with other writers. My work is forthcoming in Scholastic's publication, *The Best Teen Writing of 2021*.

- I love being in nature, and spent the last seven (non-COVID stricken) summers canoeing and hiking in remote places via Camp Nebagamon, a summer camp in the North Woods of Wisconsin.
- I really enjoy helping other people, something I try to accomplish through ESL tutoring with Literacy Chicago, public service through the Illinois Holocaust and Genocide Commission, and an internship at Unsilence, a civics education not-for-profit.

I'm Jack, a junior at Walter Payton College Prep in Chicago, Illinois. I'm also a graduate of Bernard Zell Anshe Emet Day School (a Jewish K-through-8). I love writing, *SNL*, playing piano, listening to interesting music, spending time with other people, and the Boundary Waters. I care deeply about Holocaust memory and education, a passion I pursue through an internship at Unsilence, a civics education not-for-profit for which I performed data analysis and helped create a 10-year retrospective report. I was also fortunate enough to be appointed by Governor J.B. Pritzker to the Illinois Holocaust and Genocide Commission, where I'm hoping to provide a student's perspective to the body's efforts. I'm a member of the Payton slam poetry team, serve as a Head Chair (and passionate delegate!) on my school's Model UN team, and am a reader for the magazine *Frontier Poetry*. I couldn't be more excited for Bronfman this summer!



Ben Guggenheim
Silver Spring, MD
Charles E. Smith Jewish Day School

Fast Facts

- I run a monthly podcast called *Parabiblica for the Perplexed* about the ancient Jewish works that did not make it into Tanakh (the Hebrew Bible).

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- I run varsity track and cross country for my school.
- I am a captain of my school's Mock Trial team.

Hi everyone, my name is Benjamin, and I am a Modern Orthodox Jew from Silver Spring, MD. I go to CESJDS, a pluralistic Jewish school. I'm extremely interested in the academic study of the Bible and ancient Judaism, specifically the Parabiblica, Jewish works that did not make it into Tanakh. It is to this subject that I have devoted my monthly podcast, *Parabiblica for the Perplexed*. I am a captain of my school's Mock Trial team and a varsity track and cross-country runner. I have been taking Arabic for three years now. I am interested in STEM, specifically Biology, which I believe will be one of the most important fields of human study in the future. I write short stories, some of which are to be published in my school's literary magazine. I am an ambassador for the JCRC student-to-student program, which aims to educate people about Judaism by sending Jewish students to present to public schools.

nerdiness. Left unchecked, I would immerse myself within a universe of play: Chess, Magic, the Gathering, piano, and poetry.

My family is Modern Orthodox, liberal, and environmentalist, so my social world is composed of a curious combination of conflicting communities and cultures. I go to the public high school, where Judaism, in whatever form, is not the norm. Posters on women's suffrage cover the walls. My math teacher plays pop music during class. My best friend is Hindu. Shabbat is an abrupt plunge into the world of religious Orthodoxy. Most of my religious friends go to Mizrahi, a private Orthodox High School. The conversation oscillates between school drama, games, and increasingly incoherent political debate. Despite being on opposite ends of the political spectrum, our respective political narratives are surprisingly similar, and our friendships are solid. I coexist in these radically different worlds. Is it strange? No more strange than reading a book. Between chapters, I go to school. Between paragraphs, I do my chores. We are always transitioning.



Ilan Haas
Beachwood, OH
Beachwood High School

Fast Facts

- I play chess and Magic, the Gathering. I will play a game with you if you ask me.
- I have been playing piano since I was eight.
- I like all kinds of writing: code, poetry, math.

My name is Ilan Haas, and I come from the suburbs of Cleveland. As the middle of six children, I have long perfected the art of sneaking out of a room undetected, book in one hand and candy in the other. I am constantly looking for some means of channeling my



Eva Hecht
Redding, CA
University Preparatory School

Fast Facts

- I volunteer with the Whiskeytown Environmental School (WES) community, a nonprofit focused on environmental education and rebuilding after the 2018 Carr fire.
- I play baritone saxophone in my school's jazz band.
- During quarantine I became really obsessed with learning about Antarctica.

Hi! My name is Eva, and I live in Redding, CA, which is in rural far northern California. My family is interfaith and I wasn't raised in an

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observant household, but I now attend a Reform synagogue. Because I've grown up around a lot of nature I really enjoy learning about native plants and animals. I also love music and I currently play baritone saxophone in my school's jazz band and sing in my school's choir! I'm passionate about many topics relating to social justice. I've been involved with leading my high school's LGBT club, where we work to make LGBT+ students feel more safe and welcome on campus, and I'm also a member of my synagogue's board, where I represent my congregation in community outreach and education events.



Naomi Isaac-Hyman
Philadelphia, PA
The Episcopal Academy

Fast Facts

- I'm a leader in my grade's Global Youth Leadership Institute (GYLI) group at school, which is working on creating a more inclusive student culture.
- I'm a junior mentor with Little Bella's: Mentoring on Mountain Bikes, a national all-female mountain bike mentoring program.
- I've been playing the violin for over ten years!

Hi, my name is Naomi Isaac-Hyman. I live in West Philadelphia (yes, born and raised) with my mom, dad, and younger sister. I go to a school in the Philadelphia suburbs called The Episcopal Academy, which I have attended since Pre-K (this is my thirteenth year there). I really love being outside, whether that be mountain biking, camping, birdwatching, or just sitting on my porch. I hate being cold, so don't be surprised if you see me in a sweater when everyone else is wearing tank tops. I've played the violin for over

ten years now, and I love a variety of music. My mom is from the Caribbean, so we listen to a lot of Soca and Reggae music. I love reading all different kinds of books, but if I had to choose a genre it would probably be science-fiction. I love animals; my family has a pet Bearded Dragon (a type of lizard), and I'm saving up to get a snake soon.



Tyler Johnson
Overland Park, KS
Hyman Brand Hebrew Academy

Fast Facts

- I'm Editor-in-Chief of my school newspaper, *RampageWired*.
- I'm Co-President of my school's Student Council.
- I'm a member of the invite-and-interview-only Young Playwright Roundtable at the Coterie Theatre (top five family theatre ranked by *TIME* magazine).

Hi, my name is Tyler Johnson, and I was born in Chicago, but have lived in Kansas City all my life. Over the course of my high school career, I've really worked on trying to become a better leader at my school Hyman Brand Hebrew Academy which is a K-12 pluralistic Jewish day school. During my ten years of attending, I've acquired a basic proficiency in Hebrew and am always looking to improve. Over the course of my high school career, I have developed a passion for history, politics, and social justice, particularly in the realm of racial justice given everything that has happened in the past year.

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That is mainly what I write my articles about in my school newspaper, and a few have even appeared in other organizations and one placed second in a category of the Jewish Scholastic Press Association's contest. One of my favorite things to do is talk about current events in the US and in Israel.

In the realm of my Jewish life, I'm a little bit of everything: Reform, Conservative, and Orthodox. I'm definitely a product of my surroundings at school. I'm always open to learning more and sharing.

Outside of my academics and school life, I'm a bit of a nerdy goofball, with an unhealthy obsession with Star Wars, DC, Marvel. My favorite debate question starts with "who would win a fight..." I love making new friends, and now I've got 25 new ones!

Thank you,
Tyler



Ari Kass-Amsterdam
Larchmont, NY
Mamaroneck High School

Fast Facts

- I'm a member of my school's SEC (social events committee) and the policy debate team.
- I'm a *madrich* (counselor) for younger classes at my synagogue's Hebrew school program.
- I created my middle school's first auditioned acapella group.
- I'm a proud part and cast member of the SuperDville organization and web series, respectively.
- I'm an amateur lockpicker (locksport).

Hi everyone! My name is Ari Kass-Amsterdam, I'm from Westchester, New York (about 40 minutes from the city). I apologize in advance for

the countless PUNgent puns and dad jokes I'm sure I'll make this summer. I'm a pretty big fantasy geek, from books (Neil Gaiman and Brandon Sanderson are my jam), mythology, D&D and pretty much anything you will find at a game store. I'm a huge music guy, already stressing about how much of my 100+ hour playlist I'll be able to fit on a shuffle for the summer. I listen to a lot of musicals, soft/alt rock and tons of weird stuff and am always looking to try new music. I love animals, both of the domestic and they-will-take-your-hand-if-you-get-too-close variety. I can't wait to have discussions about everything from theology to astrology!



Meyer Leff
Washington D.C.
Georgetown Day School

Fast Facts

- I've been playing music since I was in elementary school.
- I love writing plays and other fiction, and I'm an editor for my school's literary magazine.
- I'm working on a book of 200 movies I think every person should watch.

Hello everybody! My name is Meyer Leff. I was born in Texas, but I've lived in the District of Columbia for most of my life. I was raised Reform in a very Jewish city surrounded by lots of Jewish people. I am interested in most things. I would like to understand how people really are, and what it is that they want. This year, I have been reading lots of Geertz, lots of Jung, and lots of Kafka. I feel no closer to an answer. If anyone has an idea, please let me know. Most of my time, however, is spent relaxing. I enjoy nature very much. It is my dream to live in a house with walls that are wood carvings. I look forward to spending this summer with all of you.

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Caleb Levine
Montclair, NJ
Montclair High School

Fast Facts

- In the last year or so, I've fallen into an ever-deepening chess rabbit hole. I'd love to get a game with an interested fellow or staff member.
- I enjoy carpentry and built a gate and garden box for my house in quarantine. Not only is staring at a finished product after hours and hours of work immensely gratifying, but the process can be just as fun. Identifying solutions to unanticipated challenges requires creative problem solving and out-of-the-box thinking. It's like a puzzle.
- I'm part of a campaign aiming to rethink and transform policing in my town, Montclair, NJ. Research I did over the summer revealed startling racial disparities in Montclair police use of force and demonstrated that the size of our police force far exceeds regional and national benchmarks. The organization of which I'm a part, Montclair Beyond Policing, seeks to ameliorate racial injustice in Montclair policing, and ultimately, reallocate funds away from the department toward non-policing public safety and public health alternatives.

Hi! I'm Caleb Levine, a Reconstructionist Jew from Montclair, NJ. I have two siblings: Izzy just graduated from McGill University in Montreal and AJ goes to Lesley in Boston.

I've played sports for most of my life, whether it be baseball in first and second grade, soccer through all of elementary and middle school, or more recently, basketball. I found a free hoop on

Craigslist a year ago and put it on my curb - I play every day.

Music is a pretty big part of my life, too. I play a little drums and a little piano, with a jazz focus in the last year or two. My friends and I love getting together to make music, sometimes with live instruments but more often on digital production software. I mostly listen to hip hop and R&B, but also have some jazz, folk, funk and soul in rotation.

I've been taking pictures, at varying levels of seriousness, since sixth or seventh grade. It began on one of my family's August pilgrimages to New Hampshire, where my mom's family has owned a cabin deep in the woods since the 1930's. I picked up my sister's Canon, pointing it at whatever caught my eye. I used the money I was given for my bar mitzvah to get my own camera, which I use to this day. My passion began with animal photography, but has since shifted toward landscapes, industrial, and portraiture. I've been experimenting a little with film as of late, but it's a bit daunting.

I was vegetarian for about three years but went to Spain, where maintaining a meatless diet is virtually untenable, and lacked the will power to go back after returning to the US.



Ryder Lippman
New York, NY
Hunter College High School

Fast Facts

- I can play three instruments, guitar, keyboards, and drums (four if you count singing!), and hope to learn a few more. Also, I released an EP of original music this past September. Go check it out here!
<https://soundcloud.com/ryder-lippman/sets/hindsight-is-2020>

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- You might recognize Hunter High School as the school Lin-Manuel Miranda went to. I've been involved in eight theatre productions there, both as an actor and a music director. Once, Lin walked into the auditorium while I was at the piano playing a rehearsal and I freaked right out!
- I've always loved the sound of languages, and picking up languages; I'm mostly fluent in French. I remember I learned how to read and speak Hebrew in a few months, so that I could run my own Bar Mitzvah. While studying classical piano with my Russian teacher as a kid, I learned how to read some Russian so that I could understand the titles of the pieces she was assigning me.

Hi! I'm Ryder. I'm 17 years old and I'm from New York City. I go to Hunter College High School (though, of course, I've been attending virtually for the past 14 months). I can't wait to get back to school to be together with my friends; being in crowded Manhattan through the pandemic has been tough. I love all things music: listening to it, playing it, and writing and performing it. I also enjoy theatre, writing, reading, and generally all things that invite me to engage in a creative process with others. I'm a naturally collaborative person; I love discussing my favorite subjects with others and gaining insight that way as well. My parents both come from Montreal, and I have spent a lot of time in Canada. Like all my family, I am a pretty decent downhill skier. We were all sort of forced to learn how to ski when we are very little, and I love it. It's been a long over-a-year in lockdown to semi-lockdown, and I'm really looking forward to being a part of this Fellowship.



**Micaela
Mellicovsky**
London, Ontario
*Sir Frederick Banting
Secondary School*

Fast Facts

- I'm co-president of my school's DECA chapter.
- I'm a member of my school's Reach For The Top Senior team.
- I work at Kumon as a math & reading instructor.

Hi! I'm Micaela, but everyone calls me Mica. I live in London, Ontario, a small-ish city in Canada. My parents and older sister emigrated from Buenos Aires, Argentina, where most of my extended family still lives. I was born shortly afterwards, followed by my younger sister. I currently attend Sir Frederick Banting Secondary School as part of my school's French Immersion program, so most of my courses are taught in French. So far this year, my favourite classes have been French, Physics, and Spanish. Additionally, I've always been extremely passionate about math. For me, it's a puzzle and there is nothing more satisfying than being able to solve it. In my free time, I'm probably listening to some of my favourite musicians, like Taylor Swift, HAIM, & Lorde, playing burako (but we use Rummikub tiles) or dominoes with my family, baking, puzzling (sudoku, crosswords, really anything) or hanging out with friends (pre-Covid). I'm excited to learn more about Judaism and learn what being Jewish means from a wide variety of perspectives.

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Yossi Moff
Foster City, CA
Aragon High School

Fast Facts

- Molecular biology and immunology have fascinated me even before COVID vaccines. I

was very excited to participate in a hands-on experience last summer, which was, of course, cancelled, but I am still hoping to find a lab opportunity in the near future.

- For as long as I can remember, I have played the piano (and still remember my excitement the first time I played a piece with both hands!). Although recently it has been difficult to find the time to practice, when I do, I am so grateful to be able to practice with my grandmother, who is an amazing piano teacher, over Skype.
- Since Ramah Galim (Camp Ramah in Northern California) opened about five years ago, it has become my happy place - I have loved spending summers with close friends in a beautiful location on the beach, and I even had the bonus of getting my Scuba diving license one summer at camp.

Born in Baltimore, MD, I moved to San Mateo, CA at the very mature age of four weeks where I have had the joy of growing up surrounded by my maternal grandparents, aunt, uncle, and cousins. We have Shabbat dinner together every week (the pixelated zoom boxes have definitely been a change), and my dinner entertainment has evolved from a made-up "Fireball" game with cousins to conversations about my grandparents' life in the Former Soviet Union and their immigration experiences. Before Zoom Shabbat came about in response to quarantines, I walked to synagogue just about every Shabbat morning, so I have recently been thinking a lot about what post-pandemic synagogue life will

look like - what should be reintroduced, be preserved, be innovated. I went to a community Jewish day school through 8th grade and now attend a public high school, where I frequently struggle with being the only observant Jew in a secular environment - missing school for *Chag* or balancing social events on a Friday night were constant challenges before COVID. You can often find me eager to debate topics like the pros and cons of universal healthcare or engage in complex political discussions. As of late, I have been grappling with the balance between radical versus incremental change when it comes to the clear necessity for societal reforms. On a lighter note, I have developed somewhat of an obsession with exercise throughout the pandemic. I am thrilled that the high school tennis season is happening, I've enjoyed getting back to the gym, and I've almost mastered a handstand!



Talia Namdar-Cohen
New York, NY
*Abraham Joshua
Heschel School*

Fast Facts

- I love public speaking and am one of the captains of the mock trial team at my school. I was immediately drawn to mock trial because it combines law, logic, and social issues with a hefty dose of drama.
- I am very committed to volunteer work.
- Before the pandemic, I worked at a daycare with underprivileged children and tutored at a church near my house. I also volunteer with Dorot and Jasa, two Jewish programs that work with the elderly.
- I love playing tennis and have been on my school's team since freshman year.

Hello everyone, my name is Talia Namdar-Cohen. I live in Manhattan with my sister and parents, and attend a pluralistic Jewish school called Heschel. My father is from Israel, so I have

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spent a lot of time there in my life. I am fluent in Hebrew, and am very connected to Israeli culture. My father is a writer, so I have grown up in household of book lovers, and have developed my passion for writing over the years. My favorite subject in school is Social Studies, and I have just recently finished my 11th grade final research paper which was focused on the influence that the White Revolution had on the fall of the Shah in the Islamic Revolution of 1979. This topic was of particular interest to me because my dad's side of the family is Iranian, and many of my relatives were living in Tehran at this time.



Angelina Palumbo
Dobbs Ferry, NY
The Leffell School

Fast Facts

- I am a vegetarian. After starting Chipotle and having to marinate meat, I could never look at it the same again. #SaveTheAnimals
- I attended an international music convention (MekoRock) held in Israel in 2019.
- I've met Jewish teens from around the world, including Moldova, Ukraine, Israel, and the Dominican Republic.

Shalom! My name is Angelina Maria Palumbo, sounds super Jewish right? I'm half Italian and can make a mean bowl of pasta. To add to my list of cooking abilities, I work at Chipotle. Just a heads up don't get the Barbacoa, it comes from a bag. I play the stand-up bass and the bass guitar. My passion is art, my room is covered in graffiti and murals. I am currently married to J.Cole, I'm just not sure if he knows yet... My favorite color is green because my birthday is March 18th, which is the day after St. Patrick's Day so all my decorations were always green. I love horror movies and Saw is my favorite franchise. I've seen all eight movies twice. My

favorite food is French toast, any time of the day. I have a severe caffeine addiction, I'm on a first name basis at Dunkin. My dream car is a white Mini Cooper convertible or a pink G-wagon, although it'll take making a few more burritos to get there. I am the president of the Art's Board at my school and am a HUGE theater geek. If I could live anywhere in the world I would live in Mohegan Sun Casino in Connecticut, because they have two Krispy Kremes. I LOVE jelly donuts. I am really outgoing, super loud, and sometimes funny.



Reyna Perelis
Teaneck, NJ
SAR High School

Fast Facts

- I've been playing soccer since I was four, and am currently fortunate to play for my town's travel team.
- I'm a member of SAR's Model UN team.
- I'm a postcrosser. I send postcards to people around the world, and get some pretty cool postcards in return.
- I have a little garden in my room - a cactus, a leafy and flowering plant, and a red lime tree.

Hi, I'm Reyna! I live in Teaneck, NJ, and I'm the oldest of four. I go to SAR High School, a Modern Orthodox, co-ed school in the Bronx. I love everything related to the outdoors, and spend my free time drawing and reading. I love asking big questions, and learning from people who have different lived experiences than me!

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Josie Reich
Washington D.C.
*School Without Walls
High School*

Fast Facts

- I've performed in over a dozen musicals.
- I worked as a field organizer on a Congressional campaign in North Carolina.
- I'm headed to Public Forum Debate National Championships next month.

Hello! My name is Josie Reich, I'm from Washington, D.C., and I am so excited to be a part of the Fellowship this summer. I'm a singer, a debater, a writer, a reader, a walk-taker, an adventure-seeker, a rock-painter, a movie-maker, a political junkie, a bad dancer, a fashion enthusiast, a dumpling eater, a fancy-breakfast-maker, and an alliteration lover. For further facts, form friendship.

I'm a student at School Without Walls Senior High School and am an active member of the school community, from founding the literary magazine to serving as president of the drama club and vice president of the debate team. I'm also representing SWW in the 2021 Public Forum Debate National Championships. I am passionate about politics and worked as a field organizer on a Congressional campaign in North Carolina this past election season. I've performed in over a dozen musical productions, placed 3rd in the Charles Williams Vocal Competition for classical singing, and am a Student of Distinction at Levine School of Music.



Maya Renaud-Levine
Brooklyn, NY
*Beacon High
School*

Fast Facts

- I'm a singer in the Brooklyn Youth Chorus' Concert Ensemble, a Grammy award-winning program that collaborates with artists from around the world.
- I work as Rosh Madricha at Congregation Beth Elohim's Yachad program.
- I'm co-founder of Teens Turn Out, a student-led initiative to pre-register students over sixteen to vote.

Hi everyone! My name is Maya Renaud-Levine and I am a junior at The Beacon School, a public high school only a few blocks off of Times Square in Manhattan, NY. When I'm not navigating the subway system or weaving through tourists, I dedicate most of my time to the arts: I sing in a chorus three times a week (latest project: a collaboration with STING) and play classical piano. Over quarantine, I've started writing poetry and spending more time reading - I try to strike a balance between classical literature and paperback crime novels. I also love to draw, listen to podcasts, spend time with friends, and play word games (Boggle, Bananagrams, crosswords, I'll do them all). My family covers a pretty broad spectrum of Judaism, but I am a member of a Reform synagogue where I have attended and taught at the Hebrew school program. Open dialogue, political debate, and social justice have been intrinsic to my experience as a Jew - and I am beyond excited to bring this discourse to another level this summer.

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Nina Sandman
Albuquerque, NM
Albuquerque Academy

Fast Facts

- I started playing the ukulele after being given one as a Bat Mitzvah present.
- My dream job is to work on a political staff.
- My favorite subject is Spanish and I have always wanted to spend a year abroad in a Spanish-speaking country during college.

Hi! I'm Nina Sandman; I use she/her pronouns. I was born and raised in Albuquerque, New Mexico, and have attended the Albuquerque Academy since sixth grade. My favorite subject is Spanish, though I really enjoyed the Music Theory class I took this year. I'm very into music; at school; I'm in the a cappella group (The Unaccompanied Minors) as well as the Steel Drum Band. I play the ukulele and love to sing. In my free time, I volunteer in the youth leadership branch of Albuquerque Involved, a nonprofit in the area, as well as hang out with friends and family. I attend Congregation Albert, a reform synagogue, and I spent eight summers at URJ Camp Newman, which is based in Santa Rosa, California. I have one sister, Micah, who is a sophomore at Washington University in St. Louis, and a dog named Louie.



Ephraim Shalunov
Lafayette, CA
Visions in Education

Fast Facts

- I do indoor rock climbing and love the outdoors!
- I've backpacked across hundreds of miles of wilderness, desert, and

mountains, and peak at 5.12b/c and V6-8. I've seen FAR too many bears.

- I've spent my high school career independently studying a multitude of college classes to allow me to learn at my own pace, and self-taught myself programming from a young age, allowing me to get an amazing position as a developer at an AI Research company.
- I'm in CAP, which is a uniformed paramilitary civilian auxiliary of the US Air Force. We do search and rescue, disaster response, aerial reconnaissance, and more.
- I've had wonderful opportunities to fly, to lead my Airmen, and learn so much.

Hi, I'm Ephraim—born to Soviet-émigré parents of mixed Sephardi and Ashkenazi roots. As a life-long and steadfast Zionist, I love to research and debate issues surrounding the US-Israeli relationship (so much that I've made a whole organization about it)! I love nature, the outdoors, hiking, climbing, and flying, which I do through the USAF Auxiliary, Civil Air Patrol. I'm an independent Jew; forming my own opinions through learning about the interpretations of our storied history, law, tradition, and culture is a passion. I'm a connoisseur of fine bagels, a delinquent student of Russian poetry, and an easily distractible programmer. I've been described, by both friends and foes, as "a lot." Not sure what to make of it.



Mia Shenkman
Arlington, VA
Washington-Liberty High School

Fast Facts

- I'm the founder of my school's speech + storytelling club.
- I'm passionate about backpacking, hiking, and biking.

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- I play the trumpet in my school's marching band.

Hi everyone! I'm Mia, from Arlington, VA (right outside of DC) and I attend Washington-Liberty High School. I would consider myself a fan of all things theatre and music and will often find a way to get on stage somehow. I participate in a poetry recitation competition at my school called Poetry Out Loud, where I have developed a love for public speaking and poetry. A lot of my Jewish identity revolves around social action, as I am the social action Vice President of my local youth group. I have a passion for educational programming and love to create social action-based activities to incorporate into Jewish teen events. Song-leading and singing are two other essential aspects to my Jewish identity, and I will be down to start a Shabbat song session at any time! On the weekends I work at my local farmers market where I sell vegetables for Potomac Vegetable Farms and spend time exploring nearby campsites and trails in the Shenandoah Mountains.



Joshua Siegel
Bellaire, TX
St. John's School

Fast Facts

- I'm a prefect, one of seven members of my school's senior student council.
- I'm a student project leader for the Urban Harvest Farmers Market in Houston.
- I'm Co-Captain for the American Rocketry Challenge.

Hi, I'm Josh Sigel and I'm super excited to be participating in Bronfman this year! I'm a junior at the St. John's School in Houston, Texas. While my high school is (clearly) not Jewish, I am a member of the Reform Jewish community. One of my passions is language learning and I've

studied Latin, Spanish, and Arabic. I see learning languages as the most important form of cultural connection, so whether I am talking to friends in Morocco or family in Mexico, I enjoy honing my language skills and gaining broader cultural horizons. Additionally, I find Latin to be a charming language with fascinating culture and philosophy. Whether I am studying Vergil and Caesar in school or Lucretius and Catullus at home, peering into an ancient civilization is one of my passions. I also enjoy reading literature with the goal of discovering a cure for the spiritual crisis that has encapsulated the world for the past century and a half. This search has taken me from Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel to Carl Jung and from T.S. Eliot to Nietzsche. Some of my recent favorites have been *The Undiscovered Self* (C.G. Jung) and *De Rerum Natura* (Lucretius). I look forward to discussing spirituality and philosophy further over the next year. Outside of academics, I play saxophone and sing bass in my choir, regularly getting in fights with section members about who has the lowest range. My best friend and I enjoy playing vocal and instrumental jazz outside of school.



Yona Sperling-Milner
Bronx, NY
SAR High School

Fast Facts

- I'm captain of the Environmental Club and founder of the Uighur Advocacy Club at my school.
- I'm editor-in-chief of a seasonal Torah journal and a biweekly Israel newsletter.
- I'm learning Yiddish on Duolingo and I must say, that owl is an emotionally manipulative bully.
- I love my family and I am very grateful for my little sisters and my dog for helping me write this!

My name is Yona Sperling-Milner, and I live in Riverdale, NY. As of 2019, I lived in Washington,

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D.C., and I've also lived in Ra'anana, Israel. During my time in New York, I have attended SAR High School, a Modern Orthodox co-ed yeshiva, where, among other things, I founded the world's first support group for those with hyphenated surnames. Even though my attention span is maybe six seconds (still better than a goldfish), I love reading presidential biographies, birdwatching, and sewing and cooking in case feminism fails me and I have to become a housewife. You really never know. Over the past year and change, I have also been learning *daf yomi* (sometimes with Reyna!). Unless something seismic changes over the next few months, you can expect me to be Orthodox, contrarian, and a rabid vegetarian. Lucky I'm also stubborn as a mule so we're safe. Outside of the previously listed hobbies, I love crossword construction and puzzles. Oh--that reminds me. Kit-Kats (a hyphenated food!) to whoever finds the puzzle I hid in this bio.



Ma'ayan Stutman-Shaw
Washington D.C.
Georgetown Day School

Fast Facts

- Lead organizer for Georgetown Day School's Annual Summit Addressing Sexual Assault and Consent.
- I'm an alumna of the Rising Voices Fellowship, Jewish Women's Archive's Jewish feminist writing fellowship.
- I'm the head of the Jewish Student Coalition, elected representative of my school's student government.
- I'm an active participant in Fata Morgana, Georgetown Day School's student-run, student-led dance company.

Hi guys! My name is Ma'ayan Stutman-Shaw, and I'm a current junior at Georgetown Day School in Washington, D.C. While I have never strongly identified with a certain Jewish

denomination, many of my Jewish beliefs align with the Reconstructionist movement and the idea that *halacha* (Jewish law) should have a vote but not a veto in the way that we live our lives. I love to dance and have been dancing (mostly hip-hop) since I was three years old. I'm also a self-proclaimed English nerd and find close reading to be one of the most exciting intellectual experiences possible (my current favorite book is *Invisible Man* but this changes every other week). I love Trader Joe's Scandinavian Swimmers, *New Girl/The Office*, "Tiny Love Stories" via the New York Times, Neil Patrick Harris' Tony Awards Opening Numbers, learning Hebrew, playing Rummikub (pronounced ruh-mee-cub), and my new pandemic puppy Boaz. Growing up in Washington, D.C. (one of the most liberal cities in the country) and attending Georgetown Day School (one of the most liberal schools in the city), my world has been filled with homogenous opinions since I learned what the word homogenous meant. Having the opportunity to engage with and be challenged by other intellectually curious teens with diverse opinions and ideologies was one of the things that drew me to the Bronfman Fellowship in the first place.