



Young Leadership Development Program

2024-2025 Curriculum & Schedule

Program Overview: Monthly sessions on varying topics related to becoming a strong leader in a Jewish community. Each session will include a lunch/dinner prior to the discussion. The end of each session will feature an agency spotlight for participants to become acquainted with the different Jewish agencies they can serve upon completion of the program. In the middle of the program, participants will travel to Israel on a solidarity mission trip. The cost of the trip is covered by the Federation, contingent upon:

- participants attending all sessions (with the ability to miss 1 with adequate forewarning)
- participants serving on the board/committee of any Jewish agency in Birmingham upon completion of the program
- participants making a \$180 donation which will go towards a Giving Circle** with funds matched by the BJF

*Note: this will be a fully in-person program, there will be no Zoom options

**A giving circle is an allocations exercise where a group decides collectively how to give money to organizations. The funds given by participants will be matched by the Birmingham Jewish Federation to allocate a total of \$3,600.

Saturday, November 2 and Sunday, November 3, 2024

Topic: Program Kickoff

Beginning with a Saturday night Havdalah and dinner, participants will submerge themselves in weekend-long retreat where they will get to know their fellow cohort members, overview the next few months of programming, learn about Federation, Jewish philanthropy, and how to best represent their community.

Participants will be asked to consider what they think is missing in our Jewish community and what they hope to achieve by the end of this program. will also sign a social contract and discuss expectations as a member of the cohort. Participants will also receive a crash course in the history and impact of the Jewish community in Birmingham, from the early days of the city, the founding of the first temple, and the close ties that Jewish Birmingham businesses and philanthropists have had with the city’s success over the years.

By the end of this session, participants should walk away with enhanced understanding of upcoming program sessions, familiarity with their cohort, greater understanding of the work and role of the Birmingham Jewish Federation and partner agencies, and ideas for ways to improve our community

Location: Birmingham, Alabama

Presenters: Maya Dolgin, Tim Caspar, Margaret Norman, Lay Leaders

Agency Spotlight: Birmingham Jewish Federation & Foundation, Local Synagogues

Sunday, December 8, 2024

Topic: Public Speaking and Presentation Workshop

As a lay leader, public speaking and giving impactful presentations are integral to your role within a group and community at large. It not only matters what you are saying, but also how you say it. Participants will engage in a workshop led by local improv coach, Tim Casper, to enhance public speaking and presentation skills. Community lay leader, Rebecca Rothman will also share her experience serving in the Birmingham Jewish community. Participants will also tour the Day School.

By the end of this session, participants should feel more comfortable speaking publicly, presenting their ideas to groups, and asserting ideas in impactful ways.

Location: NEMJDS

Time: 10:00 AM -2:00 PM

Presenter: Rebecca Rothman and Tim Casper

Agency Spotlight: NEMJDS



Monday January 13, 2025

Topic: Finance 101

When serving on a board, basic fiduciary knowledge is necessary. From reading spreadsheets and understanding pnls to creating budgets, participants will get a crash course on the important role finances play within organizations. Participants will also learn about differences in donations, such as designated gifts and what it means to honor the intent of a gift.

By the end of this session, participants should walk away with basic understandings of organization finances, be able to read and understand budgets and 990s, and understand the fiscal health of an organization.

Location: CJFS Conference Room

Time: 6:00-8:00 PM

Presenter: James Moody, Birmingham Jewish Foundation Staff

Agency Spotlight: CJFS

Sunday, February 23, 2025

Topic: Jewish Ethics and Zionism

In preparation for the trip to Israel, it is important to discuss the place of Israel in current discourse. What does it mean to be a Zionist? Why has this become such a contested term? How can Jewish leaders wrestle with conflicting personal beliefs and community stances? Jason Harris, Creator and host of “Jew Oughta Know” podcast will lead participants through a discussion of what it means to be a Jewish leader in a post October 7th world. At the end, participants will also hear from Victoria Kimerling Oliphant about the Israel World Jewry Bureau (IWJB) and the different organizations supported through this unique allocations process.

By the end of this session, participants should have an enhanced understanding of the history of Israel, the meaning of “Zionism,” and best practices for navigating hard conversations with community members.

Location: TBA

Time: 10:00 AM -2:00 PM

Presenter: Jason Harris, Creator and Host of “Jew Oughta Know” podcast

Agency Spotlight: IWJB, P2G, Israel Committee



Sunday, March 23- Sunday, March 30, 2025

Israel Trip

Participants will travel to Israel for a week-long solidarity mission. Further itinerary to come. *In the event that travel to Israel is unavailable, there will be an alternative Jewish learning trip.* This trip is fully subsidized by the Birmingham Jewish Federation, but participants are responsible for their own airfare.

Tuesday, May 6, 2025

Topic: The Holocaust

The Holocaust, also known as the Shoah, was the genocide of European Jews during World War II. Between 1941 and 1945, Nazi Germany and its collaborators systematically murdered 6 million Jews across German-occupied Europe, approximately two-thirds of Europe's Jewish population. This was, and continues to be, one of the darkest periods in Jewish history. Participants will learn about the Holocaust and tour AHEC.

By the end of this session, participants should walk away with enhanced knowledge and understanding of the Holocaust and its ongoing ramifications. Participants will also gain familiarity with the work of the AHEC.

Location: Alabama Holocaust Education Center

Time: 6:00-8:00 PM

Presenter(s): Jonathan Weisan, Chris Berdy

Agency Spotlight: AHEC

Monday, May 19, 2025

Topic: Governance & Board Member 101

What does it mean to be a board or committee member? What are the governance structures that make up a board? What are by-laws? How do they relate to one's role in a committee or board? Danny Cohn, BJF CEO, and members of JFNA will teach participants the roles and responsibilities of a board member.

By the end of this session, participants should walk away with a basic understanding of board and committee structures, the responsibilities of serving on a board, and best practices to work within a group.

Location: LJCC Board Room

Time: 6:00 PM -8:00 PM



Presenter: Rebecca Gerbert, Danny Cohn
Agency Spotlight: LJCC

June/July

Happy Hour Meet Up/ Pot Luck

Monday, August 28, 2025

Topic: Program Wrap Up and Bringing Everything Together

As the final official session of the program, participants will go over major takeaways from the program. Participants will engage in their final giving circle and announce their funding decisions. There will also be an overview of open board and committee positions for participants to join.

Location: TBA

Time: 6:00-8:00 PM

Presenter(s): Amy Saag, Lisa Engel

Friday, September 12, 2025

End of Program Shabbat Dinner

Shabbat is our opportunity to rejuvenate ourselves in order to continue our work to repair the world. We will celebrate Shabbat together and enjoy a delicious meal while discussing how to use Shabbat as a tool of leadership.

Location: The Weinbaum House

Time: 7:00 PM

