



**Welcome to the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual North American  
Chevra Kadisha  
and Jewish Cemetery Conference**



**Kavod v'Nichum**



**Jewish Cemetery Association  
of North America**

Skokie, IL June 12-14, 2011  
10-12 Sivan 5771

**Kavod v'Nichum** (Honor and Comfort) provides education, training, advocacy, and information along the continuum from illness and healing through dying, death, and bereavement for Chevra Kadisha groups, individuals, and the North American Jewish community. We embrace the *mitzvot* of *kavod hamet*, honoring the body which held the *neschama* (soul) of a person who died, and *nichum aveilim*, comforting the community of the living after a death.

**JCANA** is organized for charitable, educational and religious purposes. It is our mission to preserve and maintain Jewish cemeteries, by assembling, organizing and sharing information relative to the Jewish cemeteries of North America. JCANA is also committed to sustaining community awareness relating to end of life issues, and maintaining Jewish burial practices.

### **Thank You to Our Donors**

Anonymous

Rabbi Bruce Elder, Congregation Hakafa

Randi Ettner, PhD

Jewish Funeral Practices Committee of Greater Washington, D.C.

Rabbi Andrea London, Beth Emet: The Free Synagogue

Rabbi Michael Siegel, Anshe Emet Synagogue

### **Thank You to Our Volunteers**

Nicole & Rudy Ash	Mitchell Kaufman
Rabbi Dena Bodian	Kate Kinser
Carla Cenker	Rick Light
Joni Crouse & Rich Moline	Fay Lipschultz
Caroline Glasser	Susan Melzer
Carol Goldbaum	Rabbi Joseph Ozarowski
Rabbi Maralee Gordon	Laurie Serber
Rabbi Suzanne Griffel	Shoshana Waskow
Merle & Barry Gross	Elliot Zashin
Marilyn Hendershot	Ellen Zemel
Stacey Johnson	



# The Gamliel Institute is a Revolution in the Making



We are preparing leaders to help communities take on the *Mitzvot* of  
*K'vod haMet* (Respect for the Deceased) & *Nichum Aveilim* (Comfort of Mourners)  
These *Mitzvot* deepen Jewish community and transform personal spirit

## Come Learn with us:

The Gamliel Institute is a non-denominational online educational center for the study, training and advocacy of traditional Jewish practice for the continuum of care at the end of life.

Meet with Rabbi Stuart Kelman at this conference to learn more! [Stuart.kelman@gmail.com](mailto:Stuart.kelman@gmail.com)

## 5 twelve week courses:

- 1.5 hour/week on-line session
- Class assignments including 3 hours/week of reading/writing
- Attendance at the annual Chevra Kadisha conference
- \$1000.00 tuition. (scholarships available)

## Help us Grow!

We have a \$10,000 matching grant to help us develop the final two classes for Gamliel Institute, provide scholarships, and spread the word. Your gift at this conference will help us meet our goal. Every donor will receive a beautiful notecard designed by Rabbi Me'irah Iliinsky, the largest gift will get an original print. See our table or find one of the advisory committee members. We will be wearing a



# SUNDAY SESSIONS

**12:30-1:00 PM**                      **Versailles Room**                      **Welcome**

**Welcome to the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference**

**David Zinner, Ralph Zuckman, Michael Slater**

**1:00-2:00 PM**                      **Versailles Room**                      **Plenary**

**What We Are Made For? Jewish Ethics, Organ Donation, and End-of-Life Care**

**Professor Laurie Zoloth, Northwestern University**

## Workshops

**2:10-3:10**                              **Barcelona Room**                      **Chevra Kadisha Track**

**History of the Jewish Sacred Society of Chicago,**

**Rabbi Schaye Abramowitz and Rabbi Moshe Wolf**

The Jewish Sacred Society was started in Chicago in the 1960s as a volunteer effort to train people in a tradition that was disappearing. The *tahara* manual which the first JSS members developed has been used as a resource for many *chevrei kadisha* since that time. JSS remains a volunteer effort to this day and performs about 100 orthodox *taharot* a year between its men's and women's divisions, each of which has about 100 active members. Rabbi Schaye Abramowitz and Rabbi Moshe Wolf will give a history of the JSS and its manual, as well as insights into the day-to-day organization, training, and functioning of this large *chevra kadisha*.

**2:10-4:10**                              **Versailles Room**                      **Tahara Track**

**Tahara Demonstration**

**Moderator: Rick Light**

This conference session will be a *tahara* training demonstration presented “live” by local *chevra kadisha* members, written and narrated by Rick Light. The session will include a PowerPoint presentation (available on-line for later review by attendees) that will detail how a team of *chevra* members might prepare a Jewish deceased for burial. The team will follow the procedures generally accepted by many of the *tahara* manuals available today. This will be a simulated performance of the *tahara* that includes the prayers and readings, but does not include any actual pouring of water. A volunteer will pretend to be the deceased as the dressing in burial shrouds is shown. The session will conclude with a question and answer period.

**2:10-3:10**                              **Prague Room**                              **Chaplaincy Track**

**Why We Need Death Panels: Jewish Ethics, Health Care Reform, and End of Life Care**

**Professor Laurie Zoloth**

A world-renown medical ethicist, Professor Zoloth, of Northwestern University, will discuss end-of-life ethical issues within a Jewish context.

# SUNDAY SESSIONS

**2:10-4:10**

**Zurich Room**

**Cemetery Track**

## **Jewish Genealogy and the Value of Cemetery Records**

**Nolan Altman**

This entertaining presentation will explore family research basics through actual documents and examples and typical family lore. Be prepared to have some myths shattered and to leave wondering about some of the “facts” you believe to be true about your own family. Of course, we will discuss why headstone inscriptions and cemetery burial records are such a valuable resource for the Jewish genealogist.

**3:10-5:20**

**Berlin Room**

**Chevra Kadisha Track**

## **Growing and Renewing Your Chevra Kadisha**

**Moderator: Nisan Chavkin; Panelists: D. Brown, R. Seltzer, V. Weitzenhoffer**

Every *chevra kadisha* progresses through specific stages of organizational development, from formation through maturity and even regeneration. This session features presentations by members of newer, slightly older, and more established *chevrei kadisha* who will share their experiences with challenges and successes at each stage. Time will be allotted for specific questions and discussion.

**3:10-5:20**

**Barcelona Room**

**Chaplaincy Track**

## **After the Funeral: Jewish and Clinical Perspectives on Bereavement**

**Rabbi Joseph Ozarowski and Elizabeth Siegel Cohen, LCSW**

The presenters will study and discuss selections from key Jewish texts on bereavement and mourning. We will also look at the variety of reactions to grief and loss through an understanding of the phases of mourning. We will also educate as to what Jewish and general resources are helpful for the healing process. Time will be available for attendees to share their experiences with the grief and bereavement process through a Jewish lens.

**4:20-5:20**

**Prague Room**

**Tahara Track**

## **Processing Emotions After Doing a Tahara**

**Rabbi Mel Glazer**

How do the members of the *chevra kadisha* return to the world of the living after performing this transitional ritual? Rabbi Glazer will discuss some of the ways in which *chevra* members can process their own emotions after this experience.

**4:20-5:20**

**Zurich Room**

**Cemetery Track**

## **What Jewish Cemeteries Need to Know**

**Richard Fishman**

This topic covers possible legal and administrative requirements in running a successful cemetery. Program will be based upon New York’s laws and regulations.

# SUNDAY SESSIONS

**5:20-6:20**

**Berlin Room**

**Chevra Kadisha Track**

**Tahara and Autopsy? How to Work with Your Medical Examiner**

**Dr. Nancy Jones**

Dr. Jones, Medical Examiner for Cook County, IL, has a long history of working with Jewish and Muslim groups. She will discuss some of the issues which arise during a *tahara* for someone on whom an autopsy has been performed.

**5:20-6:20**

**Barcelona Room**

**Chaplaincy Track**

**A Death in the Community: Masechet Semachot**

**Rabbi Dena Bodian**

A brief look at the minor tractate of Semachot, which deals with laws of burial mourning, with some surprising insights into the Rabbis' sensitivity to issues of the needs of individuals versus those of the community.

**5:20-6:20**

**Zurich Room**

**Cemetery Track**

**Cemeteries and Federations Working Together**

**David Sarnat and Cathy Weiss**

The Jewish Community Legacy Project (JCLP) addresses the need for small Jewish communities to plan for the future when faced with the erosion caused by aging and changing demographics. The focus of the session will be on informing the participants about this effort and how they may be of assistance.

**7:30-8:30 PM**

**Monaco Room**

**Evening Plenary**

**A Responsa Study - The Seridei Aish on Tahara in a Case of Cremation**

**Rabbi Joseph Ozarowski**

**8:30-10:00 PM**

**Monaco Room**

**Evening Program**

**Deadpan Alley**

**David Zinner and Harley Felstein**

# MONDAY SESSIONS

**7:15-8:30 AM**

**Zurich Room**

**Meeting**

**JCANA Annual Meeting**

**8:30-9:30 AM**

**Versailles Room**

**Morning Plenary**

**Social Networking for Community Engagement**

**Michael Hoffman**

**9:40-10:40 AM**

**Berlin Room**

**Chevra Kadisha Track**

**Non-Profit Funeral Home Caucus**

**Rabbi Me'irah Iliinsky**

Participants will discuss the challenges and promises of organizing local non-profit Jewish funeral homes as an alternative to commercial Jewish or non-Jewish funeral homes.

**9:40-10:40 AM**

**Prague Room**

**Tahara Track**

**Tahara and Tum'ah**

**Rabbi Michael Balinsky**

Rabbi Balinsky will address the concepts of ritual purity (*tahara*) and impurity (*tum'ah*) as they relate to the work of the *chevra kadisha*. What does it mean to perform "*tahara*" on a body which still retains *tum'ah*?

**9:40-11:40 AM**

**Barcelona Room**

**Chaplaincy Track**

**Toward a Methodology for Using Classic Jewish Texts to Make End of Life Decisions**

**Rabbi Benay Lappe**

In this workshop, we will break down the process of making Jewish end of life decisions into its component parts, fleshing out and examining the role of Jewish foundational principles, rules, texts, the facts of the case at hand, and *svara*, one's Jewishly informed moral intuition, in reaching a final Jewish answer. Which Jewish principles we choose to elevate over others, which rules we apply, which texts we choose, and how we "read" all of these, have an enormous impact on how we reach the Jewish decisions we make. We will learn several classic Talmudic narratives as well as examine lists of Jewish principles and rules, to help you create your own framework into which you might add the facts of any particular ethical dilemma, to reach your own Jewishly valid answer.

**9:40-11:40 AM**

**Zurich Room**

**Cemetery Track**

**Social Media – Marketing Your Cemetery**

**Michael Hoffman**

Michael Hoffman will address specific applications of social media to the marketing of Jewish cemeteries.

# MONDAY SESSIONS

**10:40-11:40 AM**

**Berlin Room**

**Chevra Kadisha Track**

## **Non-Profit Funeral Home Panel**

Participants will discuss the challenges and promises of organizing local non-profit Jewish funeral homes as an alternative to commercial Jewish or non-Jewish funeral homes.

**10:40-11:40 AM**

**Prague Room**

**Tahara Track**

## **Comforting the Deceased**

**David Sclar**

In the scholarly and popular corpus on Jewish death and dying rituals and beliefs, the practices of preparing the body for burial is largely ignored. There has long been a Jewish tradition of washing the body as a purifying act before burial, known as taharah, but it has generally remained a mysterious custom known only to a few initiates. This paper examines the history of the taharah ritual, its standardization and its proliferation.

**10:40-11:40 AM**

**Zurich Room**

**Cemetery Track**

## **Cemetery Mismanagement**

In 2009, the Cook County Sheriff's office began an investigation into allegations of mismanagement at the Burr Oak cemetery in the Chicago suburbs. Evidence was found of disinterment and dumping of bodies into mass graves, which allowed cemetery plots to be resold, among other alleged mismanagement. A local reporter who covered this story, a cemetery regulator, and cemetery management expert will discuss the background and implications of this case.

**11:50-12:30 PM**

**Versailles Room**

## **Kavod v'Nichum Board Update**

**Rabbi Stuart Kelman and Dr. Michael Slater**

**12:30-1:30 PM**

**Versailles Room**

**Lunch Plenary**

## **Transgender Issues in the Chevra Kadisha**

**Lynn Greenough and Noach Dzurma**

**1:40-3:40 PM**

**Barcelona Room**

**Chevra Kadisha Track**

## **Transgender Issues in the Chevra Kadisha**

**Lynn Greenough and Noach Dzurma**

This session will focus on many of the issues which a *chevra kadisha* must consider when performing a *tahara* on a transgendered individual.

# MONDAY SESSIONS

**1:40-3:40 PM**

**Prague Room**

**Tahara Track**

## **Advanced Tahara - Infection Control and Other Issues**

**Dr. Michael Slater**

This session will address two broad areas of technical expertise in performing *taharat*. First, *chevra kadisha* members often encounter a *met* or *metah* who has had medical procedures, or whose body has medical devices attached or implanted. How do we deal with medical conditions which may "complicate" the *tahara*? Which devices can be safely removed, and how? This portion of the talk will be a combination of a formal presentation and a discussion of "tips and tricks" from participants. Secondly, *chevra* members may be concerned about the risk of acquiring an infectious disease from the handling of a *met* or *metah*. I will review the expert guidelines presented by Dr. Michael Bell of the Centers for Disease Control at the 2010 KVN conference.

**1:40-3:40 PM**

**Berlin Room**

**Chaplaincy Track**

## **Moments Held Legacy Work: Bob's Story**

**Todd Hochberg and Rabbi Ruth Gelfarb**

A video/photography presentation that shares one man's experiences creating legacy materials through the documentary form. Participants will watch Bob reveal what matters most for him through his last months of life. Hochberg's Legacy work using photography and video is a personal emotional and spiritual exploration of one's place during a time of life transition. Images and video ultimately serve as touchstones for feelings and memories; and as time passes their use may contribute to emotional healing.

**1:40-3:40 PM**

**Zurich Room**

**Cemetery Track**

## **Halakhic Issues Panel**

**Rabbis Maralee Gordon, Peter Knobel, and Joseph Ozarowski**

A panel of rabbis representing three Jewish denominations will address issues of *halakhah* and *minhag* of concern to cemetery professionals.

**3:50-5:50 PM**

**Berlin Room**

**Chevra Kadisha Track**

## **Organizing a North American Education Effort - Burial vs Cremation**

**Rabbi Me'irah Iliinsky and Barbara Kavadias**

*"Every good idea devolves into hard work." - Adela Basayne*

Come help us turn last year's conference commitment "to educate the general Jewish public about traditional burial" into action. This will be a brainstorming and planning session leading to concrete plans and people committed to carrying them out.

**3:50-5:50 PM**

**Barcelona Room**

**Tahara Track**

## **Who's Talking to Whom When We Do a Tahara?**

**Rabbi Stuart Kelman and Dan Fendel**

The liturgy is the response to subtle and often hidden questions. We'll look at how the liturgy works rather than what it means.

# MONDAY SESSIONS

**3:50-5:50 PM**

**Prague Room**

**Chaplaincy Track**

**Doing What Few Do: The Effects of Trauma and Resilience on Caregivers**

**Charlotte Mallon and Robin Levine**

Chicago is the only Jewish Community that has an organized, trained team ready to respond to crises and emergencies. J-CERT (Jewish Community Emergency Resiliency Team) began in 2003 and is staffed by Jewish Federation Agencies' staff. The goal is to assist organizations and individuals to regroup and return to functioning as soon as possible. To that end, two intervention models are used, with an awareness of trauma and resilience as the uniting theme of all activities. The participants will experience the NOVA (National Organization for Victims Assistance) GCI (Group Crisis Intervention) model, and there will be discussion of their reactions to the work that is done by Chevra Kadisha.

**3:50-5:50 PM**

**Zurich Room**

**Cemetery Track**

**Understanding Your Cemetery's Financial Health**

**Moderated by David Hoguet**

Three fellow JCANA members will discuss their financial models and goals and explain how their financial statements work.

**7:00-8:00 PM**

**Monaco Room**

**Evening Plenary**

**Burial In Israel: a Contemporary Perspective**

**Rabbi Seth Farber**

Rabbi Seth Farber of ITIM, The Jewish Life information Center, will provide a historical and contemporary analysis of burial in Israel. He will also discuss some of the challenges to traditional burial in Israel, highlight some of the legal developments that have shifted the focus of Israeli burial, and suggest some further opportunities that are relevant to the North American Jewish community, drawing on his experience helping Israelis and immigrants navigate the Israeli rabbinic bureaucracy.

**8:15-10:00 PM**

**Monaco Room**

**Organizational Growth: The Next Ten Years**

We will be networking and brainstorming on the organizational growth of Kavod v'Nichum and JCANA. Issues to be addressed include:

- Website development, online presence, and resource development
- Leadership development—Gamliel Institute and other issues
- Next year's conference planning—getting an early start
- Membership development
- Fundraising
- Marketing

# TUESDAY SESSIONS

**8:30-9:30 AM**                      **Versailles Room**                      **Morning Plenary**

**9:30-10:00 AM**                      **Versailles Room**                      **Morning Plenary**  
**State of the Chevra Kadisha Movement**  
**David Zinner**

**10:10-11:10 AM**                      **Versailles Room**  
**Transitions, Leadership, and Succession**  
**David Zinner**

Open, facilitated discussion on the process of cultivating leadership and successfully transitioning in an on-going *chevra kadisha*.

**10:10-11:10 AM**                      **Zurich Room**                      **Cemetery Track**  
**Use of GIS technology for Cemetery Record and Property Management**  
**James Petro**

Review of the solution, case studies of 2 operations and what it takes to move from a paper record keeping environment to a map based management system and the integration of special features for Jewish cemetery operations and congregation outreach.

**11:10-12:10 PM**                      **Versailles Room**                      **KvN Track**  
**Muslim Practices Around Death and Burial**  
**Harun Firdausi**

**11:10-12:10 PM**                      **Zurich Room**                      **Cemetery Track**  
**Cemetery Track Wrap-Up: Issues Facing JCANA Members**

**12:30-2:0 PM**                      **Kavod v'Nichum Board Meeting**

# SUNDAY

Time	Chevra Kadisha	Tahara	Chaplaincy	Cemetery
12:30-1:00	<b>Welcome:</b> David Zinner, Ralph Zuckman, and Michael Slater Versailles Room			
1:00-2:00	<b>Opening Speaker:</b> What We Are Made For? Jewish Ethics, Organ Donation, and End of Life Care, Professor Laurie Zoloth, Northwestern University Versailles Room			
2:00-2:10	BREAK			
2:10-3:10	<b>History of Chicago's JSS</b> Rabbis Schaye Abramowitz and Moshe Wolf  Barcelona Room	<b>Tahara Demonstration</b> Rick Light  Versailles Room	<b>Why We Need Death Panels</b> Professor Laurie Zoloth  Prague Room	<b>Jewish Genealogy and the Value of Cemetery Records</b> Nolan Altman  Zurich Room
3:10-4:10	<b>Growing and Renewing Your Chevra Kadisha</b>		<b>After the Funeral: Jewish &amp; Clinical Perspectives</b>	
4:10-4:20	BREAK			
4:20-5:20	Moderator: Nisan Chavkin Panelists: Deborah Brown, Robb Seltzer, Vickie Weitzenhoffer  Berlin Room	<b>Processing Emotions After Doing a Tahara</b> Rabbi Mel Glazer  Prague Room	Rabbi Joseph Ozarowski and Elizabeth Siegel Cohen, LCSW  Barcelona Room	<b>What Jewish Cemeteries Need to Know</b> Richard Fishman  Zurich Room
5:20-6:20	<b>Tahara and Autopsy? How to Work with Your Medical Examiner</b> Dr. Nancy Jones  Berlin Room		<b>A Death in the Community: Masechet Semachot</b> Rabbi Dena Bodian  Barcelona Room	<b>Cemeteries and Federations Working Together</b> D. Sarnat & C. Weiss  Zurich Room
6:20-6:30	Mincha Paris/Versailles C	BREAK		
6:30-7:30	Dinner Monaco Room			
7:30-8:30	<b>Plenary Session:</b> A Responsa Study - The Seridei Aish on Tahara in a Case of Cremation, Rabbi Joseph Ozarowski Monaco Room			
8:30-9:00	Ma'ariv Paris Rm/Versailles C Room			
8:30-10:00	<b>Sunday Evening Program:</b> Humor in Deadpan Alley, David Zinner Monaco Room			

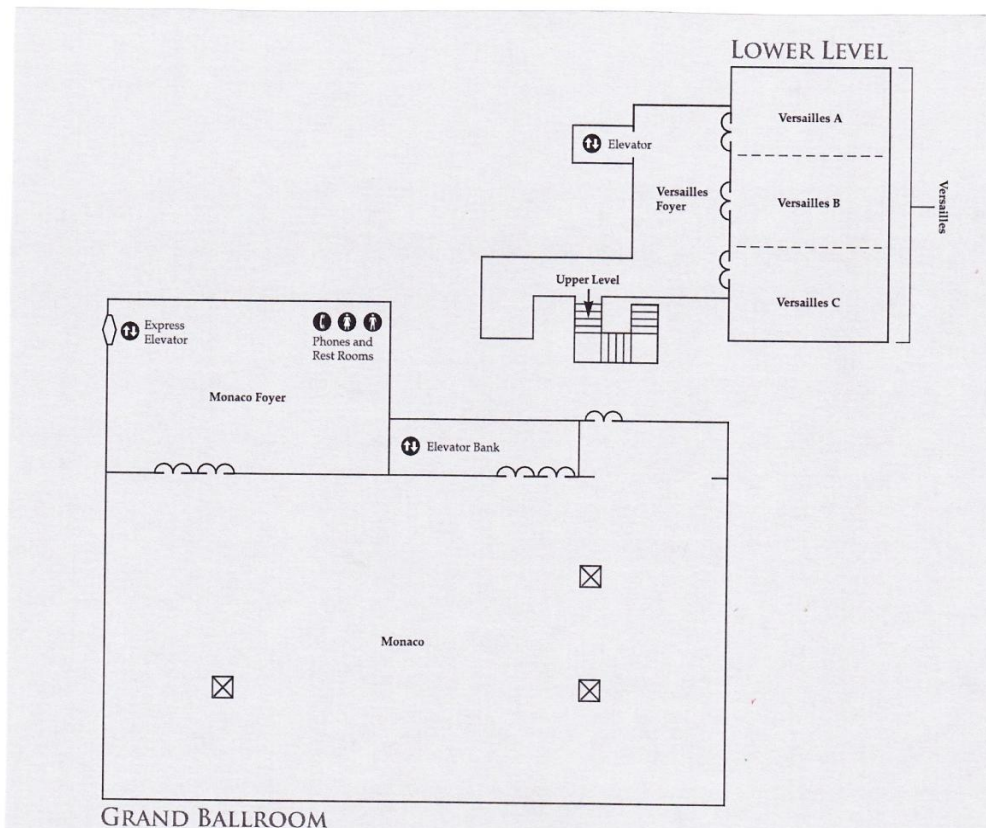
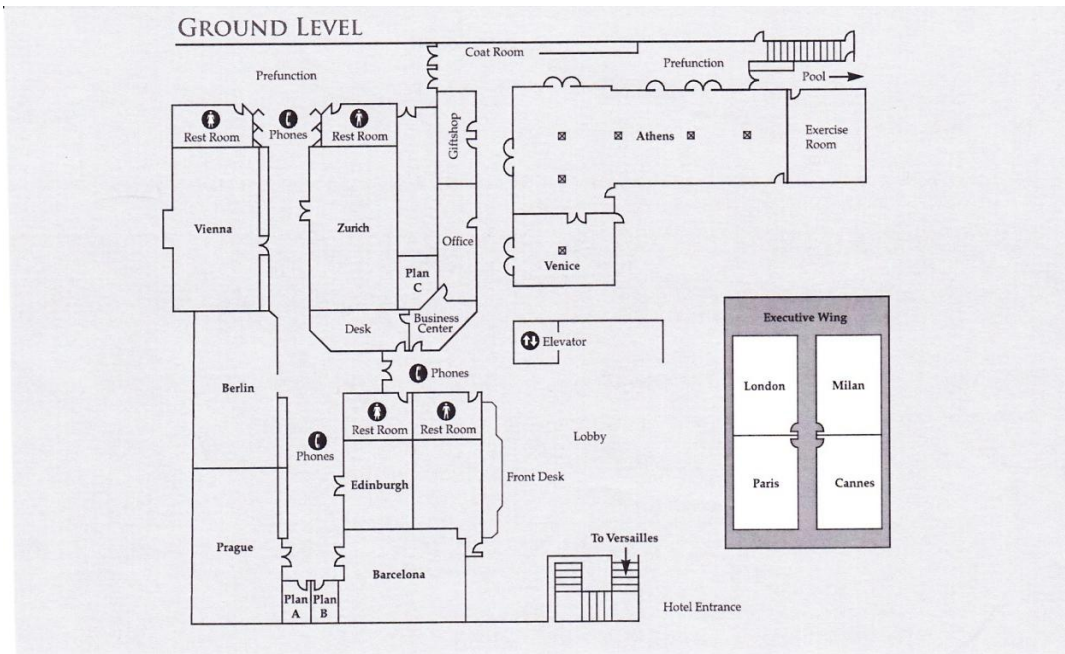
# MONDAY

Time	Chevra Kadisha	Tahara	Chaplaincy	Cemetery
7:00-8:30	<b>Shachrit</b> 7:00-8:00	<b>Breakfast 7:00-8:30</b> Versailles Room		<b>JCANA Ann'l Mtg</b> Zurich Rm 7:15-8:30
8:30-9:30	<b>Morning Plenary: Social Networking for Community Engagement,</b> Michael Hoffman Versailles Room			
9:30-9:40	<b>B R E A K</b>			
9:40-10:40	<b>Non-Profit Funeral Home Caucus</b> Rabbi Me'irah Iliinsky  Berlin Room	<b>Tahara and Tum'ah</b> Rabbi Michael Balinsky  Prague Room	<b>Toward a Methodology for Using Classic Jewish Texts to Make End of Life Decisions</b> Rabbi Benay Lappe  Barcelona Room	<b>Social Media: Marketing Your Cemetery</b> Michael Hoffman, Sandy Rife  Zurich Room
10:40-11:40	<b>Non-Profit Funeral Home Panel</b> Moderated by Sam Salkin  Berlin Room	<b>Comforting the Deceased: Modern Tahara Ceremony</b> David Sclar Prague Room		<b>Cemetery Mismanagement</b> Lolly Bowean, Richard Fishman, Harvey Lapin  Zurich Room
11:40-11:50	<b>B R E A K</b>			
11:50-1:30	<b>Lunch 11:50-12:30</b> Versailles Room <b>Kavod v'Nichum Board Update,</b> Rabbi Stuart Kelman and Dr. Michael Slater <b>Lunch Plenary: Transgender Issues,</b> Lynn Greenough and Noach Dzurma			
1:30-1:40	<b>B R E A K</b>			
1:40-3:40	<b>Transgender Issues in the Chevra Kedisha</b> Lynn Greenough and Noach Dzurma  Barcelona Room	<b>Advanced Tahara: Infection Control and Other Issues</b> Dr. Michael Slater  Prague Room	<b>Moments Held Legacy Work: Bob's Story</b> Todd Hochberg and Rabbi Ruth Gelfarb  Berlin Room	<b>Halakhic Issues Panel</b> Rabbis Maralee Gordon, Peter Knobel, and Joseph Ozorowski  Zurich Room
3:40-3:50	<b>B R E A K</b>			
3:50-5:50	<b>Organizing a North American Education Effort - Burial vs Cremation</b> Rabbi Me'irah Iliinsky and Barbara Kavadias Berlin Room	<b>Who's Talking to Whom When We Do a Tahara?</b> Rabbi Stuart Kelman and Dan Fendel  Barcelona Room	<b>Doing What Few Do: The Effects of Trauma and Resilience on Caregivers</b> Charlotte Mallon and Robin Levine Prague Room	<b>Understanding Your Cemetery's Financial Health</b> Moderator: David Hoguet  Zurich Room
5:50-6:00	Mincha Paris/Versailles C	<b>B R E A K</b>		
6:00-8:00	<b>Dinner 6:00-7:00</b> Monaco Room <b>Evening Plenary: Burial In Israel - A Contemporary Perspective,</b> Rabbi Seth Farber Monaco Room			
8:00-8:10	Ma'ariv Paris/Versailles C	<b>B R E A K</b>		
8:15-10:00	<b>Organizational Growth - The Next Ten Years</b> Monaco Room			

# TUESDAY

Time	Chevra Kadisha	Tahara	Chaplaincy	Cemetery
7:00-7:30	Shachrit Versailles Room			
7:30-8:30	<b>Breakfast</b> 7:30-8:30 Versailles Room			
8:30-9:30	Breakfast Plenary Versailles Room			
9:30-10:00	State of the Chevra Kadisha Movement, David Zinner Versailles Room			
10:00-10:10	B R E A K			
10:10-11:10	<b>Transitions, Leadership, and Succession</b> Moderator: David Zinner  Versailles Room			<b>Use of GIS Technology for Cemetery Record and Property Management</b> James Petro  Zurich Room
11:10-12:10	<b>Muslim Practices Around Death and Burial</b> Harun Firdausi  Versailles Room			<b>Cemetery Track Wrap-Up: Issues Facing JCANA Members</b>  Zurich Room
12:10-12:30	<b>Lunch</b> 12:10-12:30 Versailles Room (take-away available)			
12:30-2:00	Kavod v'Nichum Board Meeting			

# The DoubleTree Hotel Floor Plan



## Presenter Biographies

**Rabbi Schaye Abramovitz** is the Director of the Jewish Sacred Society of Chicago and teacher at Yeshiva Tiferes Tzvi.

**Nolan Altman**, a NY CPA, is currently the president of NTA Consulting, a financial services consulting firm specializing in hedge fund and asset management firms. He currently serves on a number of hedge fund and philanthropic Boards. Mr. Altman was bit by the "genealogy bug" when he was inspired to write his family history in 1996 in memory of his mother. As Coordinator for JewishGen's Holocaust Database and the JOWBR projects, Mr. Altman works with volunteers from around the world helping to grow both databases for the benefit of family members and researchers. Mr. Altman has had articles published in Avotaynu, Dorot, Stammbaum, Shemot and the FEEFHS Journal. He is a Board member and Treasurer of the JGS of Long Island, where he coordinates their Yearbook Project and is also a member of the JGS of New York.

**Rabbi Michael Balinsky** is the Executive Vice President of the Chicago Board of Rabbis, an organization representing two hundred rabbis of all denominations. He is a member of the Jewish Catholic Scholars Dialogue in Chicago, the Board of the Parliament of the World Religions, serves on the executive of the Council of Religious leaders of Metropolitan Chicago and is on the advisory board of the Bernadin Center at Catholic Theological Union. Rabbi Balinsky was a Hillel director for twenty-two years, over nineteen of those as the director of the Louis and Saerree Fiedler Hillel Center at Northwestern University, after two and a half years as the Associate Director of Hillel at the University of Michigan.

**Rabbi Dena Bodian** is a graduate of (and now an instructor at) the Hebrew Seminary of the Deaf in Skokie, IL. She has served as the Director of the Jews by Choice program at Anshe Emet Synagogue in Chicago for four years. In addition to managing Anshe Emet's chevra kadisha, she has also been involved for several years with the Progressive Chevra kadisha, a consortium of several congregations in the northern Chicago area. Dena also teaches Adult Education and tutors B'nai Mitzvah.

**Lolly Bowean** is a reporter for the Chicago Tribune, covering minority affairs in Chicago's west suburbs. She joined the Tribune in 2004 from the New Orleans Times Picayune. Her investigative work at the Burr Oaks Cemetery in Alsip, IL, helped to expose unmarked masked graves and re-used burial plots.

**Deborah Brown** is coordinator of the two-year-old Chevra Kadisha of Congregation Hakafa, a Reform synagogue in Glencoe, IL.

**Nisan Chavkin** is one of the founders and currently is the Steering Committee Chair of the Progressive Chevra Kadisha (PCK) in Evanston and Chicago, Illinois. Formally established in Winter 5765, PCK is a multid denominational chevra kadisha serving Beth Emet the Free Synagogue (Reform), The Jewish Reconstructionist Congregation of Evanston, Ner Tamid/Ezra HaBonim/Egalitarian Minyan (Conservative), Lomdim (Chavurah), and Or Chadash (Reform). A native of Onondaga County, New York and a graduate of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Chavkin is a member of Beth Emet and lives with his wife and daughters in Evanston.

**Elizabeth Siegel Cohen**, LCSW is the Outreach and Bereavement Specialist for the Jewish Healing Network of Chicago. This program, under the auspices of Jewish Child and Family Services, provides support to individuals during times of illness, addiction and loss. It is a collaboration between Jewish Child and Family Services, CJE Senior Life, the Chicago Board of Rabbis, and the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan of Chicago. Ms. Cohen joined the JHNC in March 2011; she brings over 15 years' experience working with families on issues related to illness and loss. In her position, Ms. Cohen serves as the liaison to our three preferred provider hospices. She works with hospice staff to ensure that Jewish patients receive culturally sensitive care. She has facilitated numerous grief support groups, worked with individuals struggling with life stage challenges and served as a public speaker on issues of grief and loss. She has worked in hospice, hospital and family service settings.

**William Draimin** has been a Director and the President of Toronto Hebrew Memorial Park (Canada's largest Jewish Cemetery Organization in size and interments) for 21 years. Currently, he is the Honorary Legal Counsel to the Ontario Association of Cemeteries and Funeral Professionals, and assists in negotiating regulatory change with the Province of Ontario. Previously, he has been a Director and Officer of Toronto's Holy Blossom Temple. He is particularly proud of his wife, Judi, of 48 years, and their two wonderfully accomplished children, Lisa and Robbyn, together with his 3 grandchildren, Jordan Daniel, Samantha and Joshua Daniel.

**Noach Dzmura** is the editor of Balancing on the Mechitza: Transgender in Jewish Community. Since March of 2008 he has edited Jewish Mosaic's Torah Queeries. A recent graduate of the Richard S. Dinner Center for Jewish Studies of the Graduate Theological Union, Mr Dzmura is an independent researcher, an information- and instructional- design consultant, a teacher and a writer. Noach maintains a website for transgender Jews here and has been published in Sh'ma, the Jewish Chronicle (UK) and Zeek: A Journal of Jewish Thought and Culture. He has taught at recent events sponsored by Nehirim: A Spiritual Initiative for GLBT Jews.

**Rabbi Seth (Shaul) Farber**, PhD received his Ph.D. from the Hebrew University and his rabbinic ordination from Yeshiva University. He is the rabbi of Kehillat Netivot in Ra'anana where he lives with his wife and their five children. Rabbi Farber is the author of An American Orthodox Dreamer: Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik and Boston's Maimonides School (UPNE: 2004).

**Harley Felstein** Harley Felstein has over 45 years experience with the management and supervision of Jewish Cemeteries. He has served on a civic advisory committee, overseeing the revitalization of Mountain View Cemetery in Vancouver Canada. He has been instrumental in working with IAATA to formulate the current policy and standards in which human remains are transported by the World Airlines. He also serves on the board of the Funeral Practices Committee of Greater Washington, the board of Jewish Cemetery Association of North America, and as a co-chairperson for the past three years for the Cemetery component of the Kavod v'Nichum conference.

**Dan Fendel** has been a member of the Chevra Kadisha of Beth Jacob Congregation (Orthodox; Oakland, CA) for about 10 years, has recently organized a chevra in his own congregation, Temple Sinai (Reform; Oakland, CA), and is in the first cohort of the Gamliel Institute.

**Imam Harun Firdausi** is a licensed funeral director and the president of Chicago's Muslim Funeral Services.

**Richard Fishman** is the New York State Director of the Division of Cemeteries, overseeing 1900 cemeteries across the state. He leads investigations into the illegal use of cemetery funds. Prior to this, Fishman has worked in a managerial capacity in the office of the Mayor of New York, as well as with the NYC Department of Investigation.

**Rabbi Ruth Gelfarb**, a master teacher & social justice activist, has served as the Senior Jewish Educator at Univ. of Chicago's Hillel, on the faculty of the Catholic Jewish Education Enrichment Program, and as a scholar-in-residence around the country, including Limmud Philly and Limmud Chicago. Rabbi Ruthie led service-learning trips to Ghana, Thailand, and El Salvador and is a retired navy chaplain.

**Rabbi Mel Glazer**, DD, DMIN, received his Ordination and Doctor of Divinity degree from the Jewish Theological Seminary and his Doctor of Ministry Degree from Princeton Theological Seminary. A congregational rabbi with more than 35 years experience, Rabbi Mel Glazer is a prominent GriefRecovery® specialist certified and trained by the GriefRecovery® Institute. Rabbi Glazer has counseled, lectured, and conducted workshops in the interfaith community across the United States and Canada and has contributed articles and chapters to theological and general interest publications and books. His work has been featured on TV, radio, and the Internet, and he wrote a monthly column, "Your Grief Matters," for the Pocono Record in Stroudsburg, PA. Rabbi Mel lives with his wife Ellen in Colorado Springs, CO, where he is the Rabbi at Temple Shalom.

**Rabbi Maralee Gordon** serves McHenry County Jewish Congregation in Crystal Lake, IL, and Congregation Beth Shalom in DeKalb, IL. She is the rabbi of the McHenry County Jewish Cemetery, consecrated two years ago in Woodstock, IL. In addition, she chairs FaithBridge Interfaith Alliance in McHenry County, and helps coordinate the Interfaith Jail Ministry to Detained Immigrants housed in McHenry County Jail. Rabbi Gordon was ordained by the Academy for Jewish Religion in New York City.

**Lynn Greenough** lives in Victoria, British Columbia. She has been a member of the local chevra kadisha for over 13 years. In 2000, she wrote her MA thesis, "We Do the Best We Can: Jewish Burial Societies in Small Communities in North America." She has been a member of the board of Kavod v'Nichum. She is married to Dr. Aaron Devor. Greenough is a mother and delighted bubbe of Zoe and Jacob.

**Todd Hochberg** makes documentary photographs for families struggling with the serious illness or death of a loved one and the associated grief. He works in conjunction with hospital bereavement and palliative care programs, hospices and directly with individuals. Since 1997, his Touching Souls Photography has supported parents experiencing perinatal loss, as they say goodbye to their babies. Hochberg's bereavement photographs are part of the permanent collection of the George Eastman House International Museum of Photography. He lectures nationally.

**Michael Hoffman** is the CEO of See3: Interactive Media and Marketing for Nonprofits and Social Causes. He is a leading authority in online video for nonprofits and a long-time consultant to nonprofit leaders on online fundraising and outreach strategies. He started his career as a political consultant and Washington-based nonprofit fundraiser before joining a venture investment firm to develop internet start-ups. Post-bubble, Hoffman founded See3 to bring together his belief in the power of the web and his passion and experience with nonprofit fundraising, advocacy, and education. He is a frequent blogger and tweeter on nonprofit marketing and is a nationally sought-after speaker on topics such as online cause marketing, web video, and Web 2.0 for social change.

**David Hoguet** has been Executive Director of Jewish Cemeteries of Greater Cincinnati since the formation of the organization in early 2008. He was formerly Chairman and CEO of Globe Business Resources, and is a former President of the International Furniture Rental Association of America. David serves on the Boards of CET, Project GRAD, Talbert House and The Seven Hills School. He and his wife, Karen, have two daughters. David graduated from the University of Pennsylvania with a BA in History and from New York University with an MBA in Finance.

**Rabbi Me'irah Iliinsky** has been instrumental in fostering Chevra Kadisha work, traditionally inspired innovative funeral rituals & cemetery consecration. She is a member of the Advisory Committee of the Gamliel Institute. She graduated from RRC in 2007.

**Nancy Jones, M.D.**, is the Chief Medical Examiner of Cook County, IL, which includes Chicago and its close suburbs. Throughout her career, she has had the privilege of working with representatives of Jewish and Muslim organizations on issues related to death and burial ritual. As a result, her agency is particularly adept at balancing the needs of both State and religion in performing autopsies.

**Barbara Kavadias** is the Chair of the Advisory Committee of the Gamliel Institute, a VP on the Board of Kavod v Nichum, and a founding member and chair of the Morristown Jewish Ccenter B'nai Y Chevra Kadisha. She is one of the recipients of the USCJ-Mid-Atlantic District's Medinat HaGan awards for her work in forming the MJCBY's Chevra which now has over 85 members. Barbara is the Director of Development for ARZA.

**Rabbi Stuart Kelman**, PhD, is Dean of the Gamliel Institute and has written about various issues on the continuum of life at the end-of-life. He is the Founding Rabbi of COngregation Netivot Shalom in Berkeley, CA.

**Rabbi Peter S. Knobel** is emeritus at Beth Emet The Free Synagogue in Evanston, Illinois where he has served since 1980. He has served on the board of many local and national institutions including Association of Reform Zionists of America, Union for Reform Judaism, American Jewish Committee, Jewish United Fund of Metropolitan Chicago, and the Council for the Parliament of the World's Religions. He is a Past President of the Chicago Board of Rabbis and the Chicago Association of Reform Rabbis and the Central Conference of American Rabbis. He was Director of the Resource Center for Jewish Health Care Ethics and has participated as a member on the Illinois State Attorney's Task Force "Foregoing of Life Sustaining Treatment" while putting special emphasis on health, healing, death, and dying.

**Harvey I. Lapin** is an Attorney who specializes in the Mortuary, Crematory, Cemetery, Tax and Corporation legal areas. He is the General Counsel to the Illinois Cemetery and Funeral Home Association and has provided legal services to numerous other states, local and national associations in the industry. He was the General Counsel of the Cremation Association of North America ("CANA") for over 30 years. He is a frequent speaker at industry meetings. He has written numerous articles on the subject of cremation, cemetery and funeral law. He presently is the primary writer for the "Cemetery and Funeral Service Business and Legal Guide" published by CB Legal Publishing Company in Northbrook, Illinois since 1972.

**Rabbi Benay Lappe**, Executive Director and Rosh Yeshiva of SVARA, was ordained by the Jewish Theological Seminary in 1997 and was the first openly lesbian Conservative rabbi. She holds three additional advanced degrees, in teaching and rabbinics. An innovator in combining Jewish text study and queer theory, Rabbi Lappe was the founding director of the Gay & Lesbian Lehrhaus Judaica in New York and the Queer Jewish Think Tank in Los Angeles, both of which continue to thrive. Rabbi Lappe currently serves as Professor of Talmud at the Hebrew Seminary of the Deaf, in Chicago, Visiting Professor of Talmud at the Richard S. Dinner Center for Jewish Studies at the Graduate Theological Union, in Berkeley, is an Associate at CLAL, and an educator and consultant at Keshet, in Boston. While learning and teaching Talmud are her greatest passion, Rabbi Lappe is also a licensed pilot, shoemaker, and patent-holding inventor.

**Robin Levine**, LCSW is the Assistant Chief Operating Officer of Jewish Child and Family Services. For the past 30+ years she has provided clinical services to children and families and has developed and administered programs in the public and private sectors. She is the Clinical Co-Leader of JCERT and traveled to Florida to provide crisis services after the hurricanes in 2005, to Virginia Tech to provide consultation following the 4/16/07 tragedy, and to Northern Illinois University as a responder after the shootings there.

**Rick Light** has been teaching spiritual development in various ways for over 30 years. He also teaches backpacking, rock climbing, and other outdoor skills. His involvement with Chevra Kadisha began in 1996 when he started the chevra in Los Alamos, New Mexico. During the past five years he has been instrumental in the formation of the Chevra Kadisha of Northern New Mexico (CKNNM), which serves 6 shuls in the Santa Fe area, encompassing all branches of Judaism. In 1998 he published the first edition of Guidelines for Performing Tahara as a manual to guide local chevra members in their duties. In 2007 Rick was asked to become a member of the Kavod v'Nichum board of directors, and is a Vice President of that board. He continues to lead CKNNM, teach workshops and classes in the performance of Tahara locally and nationally, and gives community lectures on Chevra Kadisha and Jewish death-related practices.

**Charlotte Mallon**, LCSW is the Director of Professional Training, Coordinator of J-CERT and the graduate student educational program at Jewish Child and Family Services. Ms. Mallon has spent the last 30+ years working with children and families in a variety of ways. She has been a therapist, program director and developer, and advocate for the children and families involved with DCFS and the Juvenile Court. In addition, she has been a teacher, supervisor, and consultant to students, staff, and programs working with children and families in many settings.

**Rabbi Dr. Joseph S. Ozarowski** serves as Rabbinic Chaplain to the Jewish Healing Network of Chicago. For over 25 years Rabbi Ozarowski has enjoyed a distinguished career as a pulpit rabbi, educator, author and chaplain. He most recently served as Executive Director of the Chicago Rabbinical Council and administrator of its Beth Din (Rabbinic Court). His first book, To Walk in God's Ways - Jewish Pastoral Perspectives on Illness and Bereavement, is considered a standard in the field of Judaism and Pastoral Care.

**James S. Petro** is president, CEO, and founder of NewCom Technologies, Inc. established in 1995. He was formerly Director of Outside Plant Engineering, McLeodUSA; Senior VP of Engineering, New Heritage Associates; VP of Engineering, Heritage Communications; Director of Engineering, Rollins Communications. He holds his B.S.E.E. from the University of New Haven, is a Senior Member of the Society of Cable Telecommunications Engineers, and a Charter Member of CableLabs.

**Sandy Rife** is the General Manager of Mt. Sinai Cemetery in Phoenix, AZ. Since 1990, Sandy was instrumental in the design plan and creation of Mt. Sinai, which opened in February 2005. She served as the senior sales counselor from 2005-2009, and became the General Manager in April 2009. She presently is responsible for the operation, sales and marketing, and ongoing development of the cemetery. Sandy's involvement with all sectors of the Jewish community has resulted in encouraging awareness of this new cemetery throughout the metropolitan area. Originally from Toronto, Canada, Sandy has been an active volunteer in the Phoenix Jewish community for over 30 years, devoting her energy to Jewish education, fundraising and Israel. She currently sits on a committee of the Jewish Federation of Greater Phoenix.

**Sam Salkin** is the executive director of the Sinai Memorial Chapel chevra kadisha in San Francisco.

**David Sarnat**, a longtime Jewish communal professional, brings 40 years of experience, knowledge, connections and relationships to the Jewish Community Legacy Project. He served the Federation in Cleveland as Director for Planning, was Executive Director in Atlanta for 21 years and was also the U.S. Representative to the Federation System for the Jewish Agency for Israel. Sarnat's recognition of an urgent need to preserve and honor the legacies of declining small Jewish communities around the country set in motion the establishment of JCLP.

**David Sclar** is pursuing a doctorate in Jewish History at the City University of New York, Graduate Center. His dissertation is entitled *He will Flourish like a Cedar in Lebanon: the Life and 'After-life' of Moses Hayyim Luzzatto*. It explores the biography and reception history of Moses Hayyim Luzzatto (1707-1746; Italy, Amsterdam, Acco), who, although controversial during his life, was posthumously celebrated by distinct and diametrically opposed modern Jewish movements. In the coming academic year, David will be a Graduate Research Fellow at the Center for Jewish History in New York. He was the Editor of the recently published *Treasures of the Valmadonna Trust Library: A Catalogue of 15th-Century Books and Five Centuries of Deluxe Hebrew Printing*.

**[corrected] Rob Seltzer is the** past president and member of the Central Florida Chevra Kadisha, which has been active in Orlando for over 30 years. Central Florida CK is a community based Chevra providing tahara to any that have a need. They supply all necessary items, shrouds, earth, etc. as well as the service.

**Michael Slater, M.D.**, is a physician specializing in Emergency Medicine at Mt. Sinai Hospital in Chicago. Michael serves on the faculty in the Division of Emergency Medicine, University of Chicago, and in the Department of Emergency Medicine at Rosalind Franklin University/The Chicago Medical School. A founding member of the Progressive Chevra Kadisha of Chicago, he is currently President-Elect of the Board of Directors of Kavod v'Nichum.

**Cathy Weiss** is the Director for Community services for the Jewish Federation of Cleveland.

**Vickie Weitzenhofer** is a CPA who has been a long-standing board member of Kavod v'Nichum. She is an active member and organizer of the chevra kadisha in Richmond, VA.

**Rabbi Moshe Wolf** is the Vice President of the Jewish Sacred Society of Chicago, and serves as a chaplain to the Chicago Police and Fire Departments.

**David Zinner** is the Executive Director of Kavod v'Nichum, a resource center for Chevra Kadisha Groups in North America. Kavod v'Nichum is the only non-profit organization in the United States and Canada that focuses solely on education and advocacy of Jewish traditions around dying, death, funerals, burials, cemeteries, grief and mourning. He is also the Executive Director of the Gamliel Institute, a non-denominational online educational center for the study, training and advocacy of traditional Jewish practice for the continuum of care at the end of life. David has authored and developed both the Chevra Kadisha and the Tahara and Shmira courses for the Gamliel Institute and co-teaches both courses.

**Laurie Zoloth**, PhD is Director of the Center for Bioethics, Science and Society and Professor of Medical Ethics and Humanities at Northwestern University, Feinberg School of Medicine, and Professor of Religion and a member of the Jewish Studies faculty at Northwestern University, Weinberg College of Arts and Science. She is also the Director of Northwestern University's Brady Scholars Program in Ethics and Leadership. In 2001, she was named principal investigator for the International Project on Judaism and Genetics. Her current research projects include work on the emerging issues in medical and research genetics, nanotechnology, neuroscience, and the ethical issues in stem cell research, and her research interest in distributive justice in health care continues.

**Ralph Zuckman** graduated from Wayne State University in 1972 with a degree in Marketing and a minor in Accounting. Working in the filing and storage industry for over 16 years, he co-founded Filetech Systems in 1991 serving as President, CEO and currently as Chairman of the Board. In 2003 Ralph was appointed Executive Director of Clover Hill Park Cemetery of Congregation Shaarey Zedek, a 60-acre cemetery located in Birmingham, Michigan. Ralph currently serves on the Board of the Michigan Cemetery Association and sits on the legislative committee. Ralph was instrumental in the establishment of The Jewish Cemetery Association of North America (JCANA) and the Jewish Cemetery Association of Greater Detroit. He was elected to serve as the first Chairman of both organizations and continues to provide leadership and vision to their membership.

# NOTES