Kehilla Community Synagogue

Political Engagement Workshop

April 2, 2017

4:00 Opening with music – Hazzan Shulamit Wise Fairman
Event overview, welcome, goals, who’s who, thanks, housekeeping, workshop schedule – Richard Speiglman

Grounding Activism in Spiritual Practice – Rabbi Dev Noily
Breakout groups – Resource people introduce selves, describe topics
Pause: Find first breakout group, get a drink, etc.

4:40 First breakout group session begins

5:20 First breakout ends; pause for transition

5:30 Second breakout group session begins

6:10 Second breakout ends; pause for transition

6:20 Re-gather, sum up, complete Feedback Forms, concluding comments – Karen Rachels

Schmooze and clean up

Guide to attached handout on actions and engagements

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NOTE: Recommendations are provided by Workshop resource speakers and are not necessarily those of Kehilla Community Synagogue
Breakout #1  VULNERABLE POPULATIONS: IMMIGRATION

Emma Paulino, Senior Community Organizer, Oakland Community Organizations

All of the actions below will be addressed in the two trainings listed at the end. Participants can just show up or can email Alba or Emma (see below) about attending these two trainings or future trainings.

1) KNOW YOUR RIGHTS Trainings: At these trainings people would learn about their rights as immigrants in this country. What they should or shouldn’t do/say at any ICE’s raid situation. How to create a family plan. Why is that important, what documents people need to create such a plan. These trainings are helpful for anyone regardless of their immigration status.

2) THE PROCESS FOR A DOUBLE CITIZENSHIP FOR CHILDREN BORN IN USA FROM UNDOCUMENTED PARENTS. Why is this important in the political environment we are living in now, what documents people need in this process and more. All these trainings are helpful for anyone who is in support of this struggle.

3) THE RAPID RESPONSE NETWORK: People will learn about the resources available in Alameda County for people facing potential deportations, the hotline number, when and how to use it and legal support in case of emergency.

4) CLEAN SLATE: How criminal records affect immigrant people during the process of becoming documented on this country or when people apply for citizenship. What is this program about, who qualifies for it, what kind of crimes could be erased or lowered, where, how and other critical information.

Upcoming events
- Friday, April 14 at 9am at Roosevelt Middle School, 1926 E 19 St Oakland CA.
- Sunday, April 23 at 12noon, St Bernard Catholic church, 1620 62nd Ave. Oakland CA

Information about these and future events: emmap@oaklandcommunity.org or alba@oaklandcommunity.org or by phone at (510) 459-8696, (510) 639-1444 X 14

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Breakout #1, continued

VULNERABLE POPULATIONS: THE HATE MOVEMENT

Lindsay Schubiner, Interim Advocacy Director, Center for New Community

National

Support the federal NO HATE Act, which would improve reporting and expand assistance and resources for victims of hate crimes. The bill is introduced in the Senate (S.662) and the House (H.R.1566). It has no California cosponsors in the Senate and only three in the House (Lieu, Cardenas and Eshoo). Call your Senators and your Representatives to ask them to cosponsor. Start with contacting the members of Congress who represent you, and then move on to others.

State

Support the California Values Act (S.B.54), which would restrict the use of state and local government resources for mass deportations. Sign a petition in support here (bit.ly/valuesactsb54), and call your representatives in California government and express your support for the legislation. (If your legislator already supports the bill, thank them and ask them to keep fighting!)

You can also follow this link (https://act.credoaction.com/call/call_ca_immigration?source=share_email&referring_aid=a265108458.1861136.pgqqzM) to call 13 key Senators. The vote is expected on Monday, so call first thing tomorrow morning!

Local

Report local hate incidents to SPLC (https://www.splcenter.org/reportthat). This resource helps researchers and journalists report on hate.

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Breakout #2  CLIMATE CHANGE / FOSSIL FUEL RESISTANCE

Janice L. Kirsch, M.D., M.P.H., 350 Bay Area, oncojan@yahoo.com
With Amy Allen, also with 350 Bay Area

1) No Coal in Oakland

In June of 2016, the Oakland City Council unanimously voted to deny the shipment of coal from Utah to the old Oakland army base for use overseas to reduce climate disruption and the detrimental health effects on local residents. The developer behind the shipping plan is suing the City of Oakland.

Suggested actions:

Join the recently reactivated No Coal campaign: "No Coal in Oakland" on 350BayArea.org

2) Peoples’ Climate Movement, Bay Area

Standing up for a livable climate, peace, Native American rights, housing and food security and against all the faces of hate, including racism, homophobia, Islamophobia and anti-Semitism.

Suggested actions:

April 29, 2017: Peoples' Climate March. Join forces with environmental and social justice groups. Rally at Lake Merritt Amphitheater followed by a procession around Lake Merritt, 12 pm - 5 pm.

1) Renewables/Legislative issues

Suggested action:

Urge state senators to support SB 692, which would ensure a level playing field for distributed energy. The bill is being heard in the Senate Energy, Utilities, and Communications committee on April 4th. (Bay Area senators Nancy Skinner, Scott Wiener, and Jerry Hill sit on this committee, and are particularly important to contact.)
Breakout #3  HEALTHCARE IN A NEW ERA

Haleh Hatami, Advocacy and Communications Manager, Alameda Health Consortium

**A. TELL STORIES** – Lawmakers and other health advocates need real patient stories to make the case for upholding and strengthening the Affordable Care Act. If you, a family member or friend have benefited from ACA (including the provisions for pre-existing conditions, adult children or Medi-Cal expansion), get the word out through the resources below and your social media accounts.

**Fight For Medi-Cal** "Alameda County Fights for Medi-Cal." Alameda County Supervisor Wilma Chan launched this digital space to share and collect stories about the life-saving importance of Medi-Cal.  [www.fightformedical.org](http://www.fightformedical.org)

#Fight4OurHealth Health Access has created a page to collect your stories and to share fact sheets and updates to ongoing advocacy initiatives.  [http://bit.ly/2l1Wwfe](http://bit.ly/2l1Wwfe)

**B. JOIN A PHONEBANK**

The House has backed down from a repeal of the ACA – for now. To join future actions like phone banking, join OFA [http://bit.ly/2o7C9TL](http://bit.ly/2o7C9TL) and learn more about other actions you can take with them.  [https://www.ofa.us/obamacare/](https://www.ofa.us/obamacare/)

**C. SEND A POSTCARD/HOST A POSTCARD PARTY**

Gather together to write to your lawmakers, asking them to defend and strengthen affordable, quality health care. The link below includes postcard templates that you can print, along with a link to finding your representatives.  [http://capca.nationbuilder.com/postcard_campaign_2017](http://capca.nationbuilder.com/postcard_campaign_2017)

**D. STAY ON TOP OF THE ISSUES**

**California Healthline** (CHL), a free, daily publication featuring health care news, opinion and original reporting, designed to meet the information needs of busy health care professionals, decision makers, media organizations and consumers.  [http://californiahealthline.org/](http://californiahealthline.org/)

**AARP – Fight for Medicare** AARP has launched a national campaign to fight proposals to turn Medicare into a voucher system. Doing so would dramatically hike costs for seniors and pose serious risks to all Americans paying into Medicare today.  [http://www.aarp.org/politics-society/advocacy/health-medicare/](http://www.aarp.org/politics-society/advocacy/health-medicare/)

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California Health+ Advocates The webpage link below can provide you with the information you need to protect California’s community health centers and their patients. 
http://capca.nationbuilder.com/healthcare_2017
Breakout #3, continued

WOMEN’S HEALTH

Cheri Greven, Director of Public Affairs, Planned Parenthood Advocates Mar Monte (East Bay / Sacramento / San Joaquin / Sierra Region)

A. **Share your Women’s Health Care Story.** Whether it’s about birth control, cancer screenings, access or lack of access to a doctor or insurance, the role a doctor or provider played in your life, or a policy decision that affected you personally, we all have a health care story and the power of telling that story cannot be underestimated. These stories can be used for educational materials, press, lobby visits, and social media campaigns to name a few. Women’s Health Care Organizations collecting stories include:

2. NARAL California – [www.naralcalifornia.org/womens-voices](http://www.naralcalifornia.org/womens-voices)

B. **Join an organization with opportunities for activism and commit to it.** By joining an organization, local or national, you will be on the front lines of women’s health care receiving direct opportunities to take action like calls to legislators or attend local events and lobby meetings.

2. Become a Reproductive Justice in Action Volunteer with ACCESS Women’s Health Justice. The next Bay Area volunteer training is April 15. Complete the application here - [http://accesswhj.org/volunteer](http://accesswhj.org/volunteer)

C. **Register voters in target districts.** There are effective ways to motivate elected officials that don’t represent where you live, and registering voters in their districts is one of them. Voter registration is already underway with over 80 volunteers in San Joaquin and Stanislaus Counties.

   Sign up here to help in this target area: [https://goo.gl/9egYup](https://goo.gl/9egYup)

D. **Increase accessibility for all people to be involved.** Marches, protests and organized actions absolutely make a difference, but they are more impactful when everyone has an opportunity to join. Disparities in access to Women’s Health Care are experienced more among low-income women and women of color.

   If you are already a member of a group, club or advocacy organization take time to meet with your members to reflect on how more people of color, young people, single parents, immigrants, LGBTQ+ can be active in your meetings and activities.

   1. Consider hosting your meetings in different neighborhoods throughout the year to welcome new communities
   2. Be open to changing meeting dates and times, or length of meetings to accommodate parents or people with changing hours at work
   3. If your group is organizing an event, do you have multiple communities represented in the planning process?

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Breakout #4   SOCIAL SERVICES / SAFETY NET SERVICES

High profile safety net services that may be affected by the new administration.

Stephen Knight, Director of Policy and Partnerships, Alameda County Community Food Bank, Sknight@accfb.org

1. **SSI/SSP**  Restore and Defend Supplemental Security Income (SSI/SSP)

SSI grant cuts and the Cost of Living Adjustment repeal have pushed more than one million Californians who are blind, aged or living with disabilities into poverty, a significant reason why we have the highest poverty rate of any state.

2. **CalFresh**  Strengthen and Expand SNAP (aka food stamps/CalFresh in CA)

Nutrition and health safety net programs protect millions of Americans from the long-lasting harm of poverty. The entitlement structure of federal anti-hunger programs allows them to respond to economic downturns. These programs largely serve working families and are the most effective tools at preventing deep poverty.

Suggested actions:
- Hunger Action Day
- Contact local and state legislators

**Services for the Aging/Older Adult Population**

Randy Morris, Assistant Agency Director, Adult and Aging Services, Alameda Social Services Agency, morrir@acgov.org

1. **Affordable Care Act** – The threat to the ACA is still alive. The proposed repeal and replacement plan would affect the vulnerable aging population.

2. **Older Americans Act** – How would the proposed reduction in funds for meals impact seniors in Alameda County?

Suggested actions. Follow specific local and national groups that closely track issues affecting the aging/older adult population that offer opportunities for community activism and advocacy.

- Local = Senior Services Coalition: [http://seniorservicescoalition.org/](http://seniorservicescoalition.org/)

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Breakout #5  VOTING RIGHTS AND VOTERS’ POWER

Dotty LeMieux, GreenDog Campaigns, San Rafael

Dotty is a political activist since the days of the Vietnam War and currently a campaign consultant for progressive candidates and causes. She serves on the Marin and the State Democratic Central Committees, where she is a member of the Platform Committee and always welcomes new ideas.

3 activities:

Join Our Revolution, an organization of people who worked on Bernie Sanders’ presidential campaign and are now campaigning for progressive candidates for other offices around the country:  https://ourrevolution.com/

Get involved with Indivisible, an organization started by former staffers of progressive members of Congress:  https://www.indivisibleguide.com/groups-nav/


Jonathan Klein

For the past twenty years Jonathan has worked with lenders and investors to finance over $1.6 billion in affordable housing for low income renters on the west coast. Prior to that he spent 15 years in politics and government working as Chief of Staff to two Members of Congress and in a similar position for a senior member of the Massachusetts State Senate.

Three Action Steps

1. Devote one hour per week to self study learning about voter rights and voter suppression by reading content on the Brennan Center Website,  http://www.brennancenter.org/

2. Sign up for a monthly contribution of whatever amount you are comfortable with to support the work of groups like the Brennan Center and the ACLU,  https://action.aclu.org/donate-aclu?redirect=donate/join-renew-give http://www.brennancenter.org/

3. Write a short letter to California Secretary of State Padilla and ask him what he is doing to work with counterparts in other states to expand voting rights in places where they are under assault,  http://www.sos.ca.gov/

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Breakout #6  CRIMINAL JUSTICE – PREVENT MASS INCARCERATION

Sister Mary Amora, Leader with Oakland Community Organizations

1- Participate in the Justice Reinvestment Coalition of Alameda County. This is a 17+ group of Centers & Movements meeting at Urban Strategies Council each first Thursday 12 – 2 pm and each third Wednesday 2 – 4 pm, aiming to decrease incarceration and redirect funds into prevention, treatment, re-entry, and criminal justice systems’ reform. The Urban Strategies Council is located at 1720 Broadway, Oakland, CA. for more information email Charles Eddy at charlese@urbanstrategies.org.

2- Attend a Town Hall Meeting on the 1400 Jobs Campaign to invest in people, not punishment and enter into vibrant actions against negative narratives, from 5:30 to 8:00 pm on Thursday, April 27th, at The Way Christian Center, 1305 University Avenue in Berkeley. RSVP requested: (757) 675-0260.

3- Ceasefire Oakland Community Organization---Police/Community Strategy for reducing gun violence in Oakland. Take Friday night walks through East Oakland to join your feet in a ministry of presence & learn the other parts of the strategy continually operating for safety of those at constant risk. Oakland Ceasefire/Lifelines to Healing fridaycommunitynightwalks@gmail.com.

4- Legal Services for Prisoners with Children www.prisonerswithchildren.org Probably donations needed to keep professionally trained personnel to not only work with the families but also with the various departments involved with juvenile justice, recidivism & passing down negative scripts.

5- Join the effort to promote fair bail policies and thereby limit the enormous incarceration rate in the U.S. since 63% of those in jail have not been convicted of a crime. On any given day, half a million people in the U.S. rot in jail because they cannot afford bail for even the lowest-level offenses. The main victims are poor and working class individuals who sit in jail for months, often losing jobs, custody of children, or the ability pay rent or feed families, even if they are innocent! Money bail systems are ineffective in ensuring that people show up to court dates. Only the insurance companies that profit off the bail bond system gain. Right now, for more information, you can Watch this engaging 3-minute video on the facts about bail: http://www.filmsforaction.org/watch/breaking-down-bail-debunking-common-bail-myths-brave-new-films/
To learn how you can make a difference, contact OCO organizer Reverend Damita Davis-Howard at 510 639-1444 or davis-howard@oaklandcommunity.org.

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Rashidah Grinage, Coordinator, Coalition for Police Accountability

1. Distribute pledge cards concerning new police oversight commission
   a. To demonstrate popular support in Oakland for major changes in policing and build the base of folks willing to show up to support the campaign.
   b. Engage in either a dinner discussion, walking tour with City Councilmember, Public Safety Committee or City Council turnout.
   c. Pledgocard signers acknowledge the problem of racist policing and are willing to be activated into the campaign (even if just to share the Pledgocard with a neighbor.) Call PUEBLO organizer Isaiah Toney to pick up cards once signed – and see what the next steps are!
   d. Questions? Call PUEBLO organizer Isaiah Toney for more info at (510) 967-9330. Sunday calls are welcome.

2. Engage in door knocking
   a. To collect Pledgecards, get the word out, and identify folks in the community who have a story to tell and want to see change happen.
   b. Outreach Days are the first Saturday of every month, the most recent having been April 1st. PUEBLO organizer Isaiah Toney is open to scheduling a special Outreach Day if folks commit to turning out 7 people on a Saturday or Sunday. Calling him is the best way to figure out when to do it. Sunday April 23rd is open if folks want it. Isaiah’s phone number is (510) 967-9330.

3. Attend Public Safety Committee/City Council meeting(s)
   a. Pledgecards show a wide support on an easy lift. Public Safety Committee speaking shows deep support on a heavier lift. We want Councilmembers to know that folks in our campaign are here for the long haul, and willing to attend an otherwise uninteresting meeting for the chance to speak for a single minute. PUEBLO organizer Isaiah Toney is offering trainings for first- (and second- and third-) time public speakers who want to join the campaign. Right now it looks like the Public Safety Committee meeting we’re going to is April 25th, but that will be confirmed at Rules & Legislation Committee on April 13th.
   b. Hook up with folks attending Council and Committee meetings by phoning Isaiah at (510) 967-9330. The schedule isn’t set in stone yet, so folks should definitely reach out to stay up to date.
Breakout #7  Civil Liberties

Jim Hausken, retired teacher and ACLU Berkeley Chapter Board Member

1. The Berkeley/North East Bay Chapter of the ACLU of Northern California has a large “Know Your Rights” campaign. Through webinars, training, and material support, we equip members and other activists to explain our constitutional rights in schools, public meetings, and events at private residences.

- **RootsAction** – Campaigns to build support to counter administration actions.
  https://diy.rootsaction.org
- **People Power** – ACLU volunteers working on countering Trump initiatives, e.g., Freedom Cities campaign
  https://www.peoplepower.org  Faiz Shakir for People Power info@list.peoplepower.org

2. Government surveillance provokes many, diverse civil liberties concerns. As new technologies become available to public safety agencies, governing bodies need to develop clear, citizen-informed and adaptable policies. The Chapter works with local officials to help prepare for these growing problems.

- **ACLU San Francisco office (Affiliate):**  https://www.aclunc.org  Contact Nicole Ozer

3. How police act with the powers loaned to them is a central civil liberties issue. Activists need to maintain involvement with police and their governing bodies to insist on best practices on the part of their police. The Chapter works with affiliated groups to monitor and recommend refinement in police interaction with the public in regard to respect for citizen’s rights.

- **ACLU San Francisco office (Affiliate):**  https://www.aclunc.org, Contact Ana Zamora

4. The ACLU is very involved in the issues related to immigrants’ rights both in terms of legal activity and outreach/education. We help to create “Freedom Cities” through our People Power program. We oppose building new jails, particularly when they are intended to house undocumented people. This involves relevant education, local and state political efforts, and outreach to parallel organizations.

- **Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) – Civil liberties, security, focusing on Muslims.**  https://ca.cair.com/sfba/  3000 Scott Blvd., Suite 101, Santa Clara, CA 95054  Tel: 408.986.9874
- **Immigrant Legal Resource Center | ILRC** – Offers a wide range of support and professional opinion on immigration related issues
  https://www.ilrc.org  Angie Junck – ajunch@ilrc.org

5. The “schools to prison” pipeline that so targets minority young people prompts various approaches: supporting efforts to reach at-risk youth, pushing schools to follow state-mandated community involvement, opposing prison expansions, and lobbying in the traditional sense.

- **American Friends Service Committee:** Action resources –
  Youth and Racism  afsc.org/yuir
  Ending Mass Incarceration  afsc.org/mass-incarceration

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Civil Liberties, continued

In February 1933, one month after Hitler became chancellor, the German Reichstag burned. The next day, free speech, free press and the right to assemble were suspended. A recent New York Review of Books piece, "The Reichstag Warning," examines the infamous incident and its disastrous aftermath. http://www.nybooks.com/daily/2017/02/26/reichstag-fire-manipulating-terror-to-end-democracy/ Discussion of the possibility of terror being used to destroy our First Amendment rights might seem academic or alarmist. But if an attack is adequately terrifying, such discussion will predictably be seen as treasonous. Kehilla member Bill Lazarus would like to explore steps (in addition to joining the ACLU) that can be taken now, in relatively calm times, to guard our free speech liberties. If interested, please contact Bill at wjlazarus@gmail.com, or call him at (510) 285-6884.

Breakout #8

Keeping Our Balance in Troubling Times: Spiritual Tools for Activists

Rabbi Dev Noily

We're living in hard times, but we're living! And watering the roots of our own aliveness is a way both to care for ourselves, and to keep us strong and supple for the demanding work of justice-building. In this workshop we'll explore practices, teachings and experiences that can help ground us in our own humanity and connect us to our own aliveness, so that we can be more fully present to what is being asked of us in this moment.

Resources:

1. Rabbi Diane Elliot’s public meditations – email Rabbi Diane at rabbi.diane18@gmail.com

2. Kehilla's weekly meditation sit, led by Rabbi Dev, in the Fireside Room @ Kehilla. Every Wednesday morning at 7:50 – 8:40 am. We begin with a short teaching, sit in silence for 30 minutes, and close with a brief chant and the Mourner's Kaddish (the Jewish prayer for loved ones who have died). We also share about upcoming actions and ways to show up.