

Simone Schicker

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SYNAGOGUE EXPERIENCE

Sons of Jacob Congregation - Waterloo, IA / 2017

High Holy Day Student Rabbi

Congregation Beth Shalom - Bryan, TX / 2016-2017

Monthly Student Rabbi

Temple Beth Israel – Bay City and Saginaw, MI / 2015-2016

Bi-Weekly Student Rabbi

Temple B'nai Israel – Parkersburg, WV / 2014-2015

Monthly Student Rabbi

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Rockdale Temple – Cincinnati, OH / Current

- 5th grade Hebrew teacher / 3rd grade Religious School teacher
- B'nai Mitzvah tutor (2014-2016) / 7th grade Hebrew teacher (2015-2016)

Women's Adult Education Classes / Current

- Courses on:
 - Three unit lesson on Dinah
 - Judaism, Gender and Sexuality
 - Male/Female Dynamics in Judaism

Kulanu: Cincinnati Reform Jewish High School / 2016-2017

- Lead teacher for the 11th Grade Seminar
- Taught Electives on: Sex and Sexuality in Judaism and Anti-Semitism

Northern Hills Synagogue – Cincinnati, OH / 2014-2015

- Music Teacher and Hebrew Teacher
- Wrote Music Curriculum for the Religious School

Temple Sinai – Houston, TX / 2003-2007 and 2013

- Religious School Substitute Teacher, B'nai Mitzvah Assistant Teacher, Religious School Assistant Teacher and Hebrew Tutor

YOUTH AND CAMPING EXPERIENCE

URJ Greene Family Camp – Bruceville, TX / Summer 2014 and Summer 2017

- Summer Assistant Education Director
- Coordinated Friday night and weekday services with campers, counselors and visiting faculty
- Wrote and implemented programming – Worked with song leaders

American Hebrew Academy – Greensboro, NC / 2011-2012

- Fellow: Residential staff member; Assistant history teacher; Jewish Life, Campus Life and Student Life Intern
- Supervised and counseled students in both academic and residential settings
- Planned and executed activities and educational programs for both Jewish holidays and weekly entertainment

Camp Young Judea – Wimberley, TX / Summer 2007 and Summer 2008

- In-Bunk Counselor
- Utilized effective leadership, administrative, motivational, interpersonal and team building skills
- Wrote and executed educational and social programming
- Led religious services – Assisted with Israel day and other camp-wide activities

ORGANIZATIONAL EXPERIENCE

Holocaust and Humanity Center / Current

- Jewish Foundation Fellowship
- Curated a traveling exhibit on Children and the Holocaust

The Jewish Hospital: Mercy Health / Summer 2016

- One unit of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) - 400 hours

The Center for Holocaust and Humanity Education / Summer 2015

- Jewish Foundation Fellowship
- Assisted with digitizing the Center's archives
- Assisted with tours, visitors, events, and the Speaker's Bureau

Women of the Wall / נשות הכותל – Jerusalem, Israel / 2013-2014

- Intern
- Researched funders and grant opportunities
- Wrote newsletters, D'var Torah and blog posts for the organization's website
- Guided guests and represented the organization to the larger community

Anti-Defamation League – Houston, TX / 2010

- Intern
- Managed an independent project that culminated in a database covering 10 years of submissions for their “No Place for Hate” program for schools.

EDUCATION

Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion – Cincinnati, OH / Current

- Rabbinic Ordination / June 2018 (expected)
- Masters of Arts in Hebrew Letters / May 2017

Activities:

- Co-Facilitator of the Gender Task Force / current
- AIPAC National Council Member / current
- Rabbinic Student Association President / 2016-2017
- AIPAC Leffell Israel Fellowship 2015-2016

The iCenter for Israel Education / Northbrook, IL / 2016

- Master's Concentration Certificate in Israel Education

Birmingham-Southern College – Birmingham, AL / 2011

- Bachelor of Arts Degree in History - 3.78 GPA - *Magna Cum Laude* - Phi Beta Kappa

Honors (selected):

- Dean's List
- Harrison Honors College Participant
- Birmingham-Southern College - Hubb's Service Award (For Service to the College & Larger Community)
- Phi Alpha Theta (History Honors Society)
- Birmingham-Southern College - Vail Teaching Fellowship

Activities (selected):

- Hillel: Soref Initiative (President) – Service-Learning Volunteer Coordinator
- Allies: Gay/Straight Alliance (President) - Hilltop News (News Editor)

Internships:

- Jewish Intern for the College Chapel

- References will be provided upon request -

Simone Schicker | Personal Vision Statement

I attended a wedding recently and found myself surprised that a fellow member of the wedding party had woken up early that morning to go hear a speaker at her church. Later, as I reflected on my reaction to this new friend, I had to admit that I have gotten used to millennials being caught off guard, and often put off, that I have stayed committed to my desire to be a rabbi since my bat mitzvah. Millennials, and the other younger generations, view religion through jaded eyes. This view arises for many from a belief that religion has inflicted so much harm on the world that they wish to have no part in it.

This is one of the reasons that so many people in the world are worried about the future of Judaism, and especially liberal, egalitarian Judaism. If the young people have no desire to come into synagogues, our buildings built on the idea of sustained growth, what will happen to the community? As a young Jew being trained as a leader for these congregations in transition, I want there to be a community for me to work for and with, in the future.

In order for there to be a community in the future, we need to recognize the hurt and disconnect many Jews feel from our established institutions. Whether it is their multiple identities coming into conflict - LGBTQ, ethnicity, ability, interfaith heritage - or the role they see organized religion has had in creating a world in conflict, we have to reach out to them and show them what Judaism has to offer. Judaism has given the world so much, we can look at the arts or sciences as examples, and the Jewish People have so much more to offer, if we are only able to reorganize ourselves into the community we have the potential to be, rather than holding on to outdated models.

As a leader, I recognize the need for teamwork between synagogue leadership, clergy, and the broader community. Judaism does not live in isolation in the synagogue; we are Jews everywhere we go and our values are what guides our actions and our beliefs. Whether one is politically active or not, we recognize that Judaism has something to say about how we live our lives. For some, that means vegetarianism and for others, it means tax reform. Judaism has

something to teach, something to offer everyone and it is our responsibility to create the spaces and learning opportunities for our members.

Our communities require leaders who are willing to meet people where they are, to connect with people both one on one and in groups, and who have the ability to bring people together. My passion for Judaism is often expressed through my love of teaching people of all ages, from the youngest members to the oldest, because at our heart we are a people of text. Our text shapes who we are and we are responsible for giving people the skills to access our text. Whether that comes in a formal learning environment, such as religious school or adult education, or in an informal setting such as a Havdalah meet and greet at a congregant's home, we have to create opportunities to give people the connections they may not know they are searching for in their quest for ultimate meaning.

As a child of an interfaith home, one in which I was given the choice of Christianity or Judaism, I know what it means to choose to be Jewish at a young age. This opportunity is what we are offering to all Jews who join our community. Being Jewish, whether you are born Jewish or have chosen to be Jewish, is an active choice that one makes every single day. In our day to day lives many of us are seen as Americans and it is assumed we are a part of the Christian majority. When we choose to say that we are Jewish, and that our actions are informed by our experience and understanding of our tradition, we are making an active choice. As Reform Jews, one of our tenets is that one should understand the tradition and make decisions of how to practice and what to believe based on one's knowledge of the tradition. I want to walk alongside my congregants as they discover what being Jewish means to them.

I look forward to having the opportunity to help people shape their own personal Jewish journey, one that I hope includes the larger community because as Jews we do not do Judaism alone. We are, at our best, a community people who recognize that Judaism does not exist in isolation. I look forward to working with my congregation to build a stronger community both inside and outside the walls of the synagogue.