

Bulletin

NCJWSM

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April/May 2022
www.ncjwgrs.org

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National Council of Jewish Women
Greater Rochester Section

Inspiring Women



Hannah G. Solomon
Recipient Carmen Allen

Woman of the Year
Rikki Brodsky



Please Join Us

Thursday June 9, 2022
at 6:30 p.m.

Light Refreshments and Desserts

Dawn Lipson Canalside Stage
Louis S. Wolk JCC of Greater Rochester
1200 Edgewood Ave.



Woman of the Year
Lisa Vangellow

We invite you, friends and family members to attend this special event. Formal invitations will be mailed out shortly. You can also go to ncjwgrs.org to register. Contact Cindy Finestone, cindyannf27@yahoo.com, with questions.

President
Lisa Waltzer

Treasurer
Brenda Comisar

Financial Secretary
Pauline Rutberg

Recording Secretary
Wendy Strauss

Membership VP
Ellie Rosenbloom
and Amy Stein

*Nominating
Committee Chair/
Immediate Past
President*
Jane Amstey

Ex Officio
Judy Abelman

Directors
Linda Bice
Rikki Brodsky
Donna Cohen
Marilyn Fenster
Cindy Finestone
Sandra Frankel
Cindy Hirschberg
Gloria Kaplan
(Honorary)
Emily Levin
Jennifer Loviglio
Lisa Vangellow
Karen McArthur
Leslie Newman
Terri Richardson
Rina Schnauffer
Cathy Schneider
Sarah Walters

2022 HANNAH G. SOLOMON AWARD RECIPIENT

Carmen Allen, President and Executive Director of Beyond the Sanctuary

It was during the pandemic that I first met Carmen Allen, president and executive director of Beyond the Sanctuary, a food pantry and community service organization operating out of Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church. I had received a neighborhood email saying a local food pantry was in need of supplies. I went to Costco, picked up items, and began dropping them at Carmen's front stoop. Social distancing, we briefly chatted through a screened door, until the time arrived for a safe, properly masked COVID porch visit. We learned more about one another, and I came to see that Carmen is the epitome of a leader – and a deserved recipient of the Hannah G. Solomon Award.

One of five children, she grew up in St Louis and graduated from St. Louis University. She worked in human resources (HR) for Levi Strauss in Knoxville, Tenn., and then was recruited by Eastman Kodak to come to Rochester for a position in the HR department. At that time, she also attended the Simon School of the University of Rochester and obtained her MBA. Carmen then went on to become vice president (VP) of HR Global Operations at Bausch and Lomb, senior VP of Vertis Communications and VP of HR at Harris Corporation. She finally retired in 2016.

But after retirement, Carmen could not sit still. She says the favorite part of her career was working with people, being in the trenches and making a difference. "Confidence and success arrive when you push through your fear of the unknown," she once wrote. "It's OK to be afraid, but you can't grow if you don't stretch and push yourself to take on new challenges. You must force yourself to learn, and, once you conquer

the unknown, you move on to the next challenge. It's a process for life."

Carmen's call to action came to her one day at her church, Memorial A.M.E. Zion. The church has beautiful stained-glass windows that are dedicated to Harriet Tubman for using the first building to shelter fugitive slaves, to Susan B. Anthony who gave one of her last public addresses in the church, and to Frederick Douglass who edited his abolitionist newspaper, *The North Star*, from presses set up in the church basement. Carmen was embraced in spirit by these influential figures and also by so many powerful members who sat in the pews around her. She then stood in front of the congregation and shared that she wanted to make a difference in the community. Could they start a food pantry? A clothes closet? She asked for help, for a team to work with her. To her surprise she had an overwhelming response literally stand beside her. Thus, in 2017, Beyond the Sanctuary was born.

Though church members remain its core, BTS has volunteers beyond the church. Its services have grown as well. The food pantry is the heart of BTS and open to all; deliveries can be arranged for populations of specific need. BTS has a Drive to Success Program, a mentoring initiative that helps candidates study for learner's permits, complete Department of Motor Vehicle (DMV) forms, and cover DMV and certified driving school costs; it is geared toward those seeking employment requiring valid driver's licenses. Its Job Readiness Success Program enables participants to become thriving, self-sufficient, working adults, earning a living wage. It provides training and comprehensive wrap-around support services so

hard-to-employ and under-employed people can successfully transition into a work environment. Candidates are paired with mentors and coaches who assist with social skills, job searches, health assessment, and business communications. BTS also offers a clothes closet.

"We don't say no," Carmen emphasizes. So if BTS does not offer a particular service, its volunteers will assist a client in finding the help needed. Carmen is a firm believer that no one should ever feel lost.

A woman of vision, Carmen is open to ideas and is a wonderful communicator. She inspires those around her and makes this community better. She has received numerous awards, including the Bausch and Lomb President's Award and the Corporate Staff Award; she was an Athena Award Finalist twice, highlighted in

Women Worth Watching, and was named a Woman of Excellence in 2019 by the Rochester Business Journal. Active in all aspects of the community, she founded the Rochester Faith-Based Community Service Alliance, was a member of the Homeless Services Network, the 360 Collaborative, the Alumni Association of INROADS and was VP of AKOMA. She has served on numerous boards of directors, including Memorial Community Development Corporation – Urban League of Rochester, Urquhart Memorial Foundation, Monroe Community College Foundation, Garth Fagan Dance and the Strong National Museum of Play.

She lives with her husband John and has five step-children.

www.beyondthesanctuary.org ≧

Rina Schnauer

THERE IS ONLY ONE BARBRA!

Many years ago, a young girl from Brooklyn, with a very "Jewish face," crossed the river to the island of Manhattan and followed her dreams. The rest is history!

Thank you to all who joined us on Sunday, March 27 for the "Hello Gorgeous" virtual tour. It was thrilling to see Barbra Streisand's iconic face fill the screen and hear the songs that many of us grew up listening to. There is only one Barbra!

Congratulations to **Vancy Boyar, Wendy Strauss, and Kathy Perricelli**, who each won a copy of the Barbra Streisand biography, *Hello, Gorgeous!*

Special thanks to **Dawn Wisset, Lisa Waltzer, and Nancy Gabrielsen-Tinnes** for their contributions to the production of this event.

Just a note: on April 24, Barbra Streisand will be 80 years old. HAPPY BIRTHDAY, BARBRA! ≧

NCJWGRS SLATE FOR 2022-23

The proposed slate of officers and directors has been approved by our section's board for members' consideration. Voting via email.

Executive Board (July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2023)

President- **Lisa Waltzer**
(Second year of 2-year term)
President-Elect-

Ellie Rosenbloom

Treasurer- **Brenda Comisar**
Financial Secretary-

Pauline Rutberg

Recording Secretary-

Wendy Strauss

Membership Chair- **Amy Stein**
Immediate Past President-

Jane Amstey

*Board of Directors
Term ending June 30, 2023:*

Linda Bice

Marilyn Fenster

Sandra Frankel

Jennifer Loviglio

Rina Schnauer

Cathy Schneider

Sarah Walters

Pauline Rutberg

Term ending June 30, 2024:

Rikki Brodsky

Donna Cohen

Cindy Finestone

Cindy Hirshberg

Leslie Newman

Terri Richardson

Lisa Vangellow

Adrienne Markus

Please contact our section office with your vote in favor or in opposition to this slate of officers. You may also write in a candidate not listed. Voting will close at midnight on May 10, 2022. All votes must be sent to: info@ncjwgrs.org

A special thank you goes out to this year's Nominating Committee: **Debi Brenner, Amy Stein, Sarah Walters, Lisa Waltzer, and Mandi Warner**. Your efforts are greatly appreciated! ≧

Jane Amstey, Nominating Committee Chair

A PERFECT PAIR!

Public Affairs Co-chairs Rikki Brodsky and Lisa Vangellow Share 2022 Woman of the Year Honor

I am honored to share this award with **Rikki Brodsky!**

Rikki is the perfect co-chair. We complement and balance each other. We are passionate about many of the same issues, and she is always open to hearing and acting on new ideas from our committee, the board, and the general membership.

It is only in the past few years that we have gotten to really know one another, though I have been acquainted with Rikki for a long time. I was friendly with her brother Paul and her sisters, Meg and Liz, in high school and beyond. And her family is a local legend! Almost every high school senior – including me – had their pictures taken at Varden Studios, the family’s well-known business.

Rikki is a loving wife, mother, daughter, sister, and friend. She often shares how proud she is of her three children, and how she loves to watch them grow and find their own personal passions. She is a devoted daughter to her beloved parents and spends as much time with them as she can. As one of six children, she cherishes the occasions when her whole family can be together.

Several years ago, I was introduced to NCJW and invited to join. One of my first experiences was at a meeting at Rikki’s house to talk with Planned Parenthood representatives about collaborating on advocacy and programming. Rikki was already serving as the co-chair of the Public Affairs Committee

and I could see how passionate she was. It was easy to channel her energy and commitment and I was proud to be part of the group that facilitated the Planned Parenthood Take Action Night in 2019. The following year an opportunity arose when Rikki asked me to be her co-chair. I did not hesitate! As it turned out, 2020 was a VERY active year for our committee; I believe we were able to accomplish so much because of how well we work together.

I have loved every minute of serving with Rikki on the NCJWGRS Public Affairs Committee and look forward to a lifelong friendship filled with respect and love. ☹

Lisa Vangellow

One of the first things I thought when I heard about receiving this incredible award is that I wouldn’t be here without my Public Affairs Committee co-chair, **Lisa Vangellow**. Simply put, it’s a really amazing partnership. It’s not that we have similar views (which we do) or that Lisa is incredibly passionate (which she is) or that I genuinely enjoy working with her, because that goes without saying. It’s that Lisa is able to channel her efforts to obtain quantifiable and tangible results. Lisa’s enthusiasm is infectious and clearly rubs off on me -- it inspires me to work harder, to be better. Equally important, it is obvious that Lisa’s political activism is changing this world so we will leave our children and grandchildren better off. Her strong sense of justice is

evidenced through all her hard work with NCJW.

Lisa’s roots in Rochester originated long ago. Her mother, Cammy, and uncle came here at a young age as refugees during W.W. II and benefited from a loving home, free from the horrors of Nazi Germany. Those childhood events helped shape Cammy’s identity and she passed her life lessons and values onto Lisa. Adding to that foundation was Lisa’s father, Leonard Maas, who was a judge and contributed to his daughter developing a strong moral compass. Today, Lisa has a wonderful blended family with her husband, Neal, and their five children; together they continue to emphasize and work toward the betterment of our community.

When Lisa agreed to co-chair the Public Affairs Committee, I knew we were in good hands. Lisa had previously served as a member of our committee and it was clear that she had numerous talents ranging from eloquent writing skills to organizational management to compassion for the under-represented. Lisa has been invaluable in helping steer the public affairs ship and take its work to a more productive level. Whether working on Limited Service Pregnancy Centers, voting advocacy, or gender and LGBTQ rights, Lisa has been by my side. No job is too big or too small. When Lisa is committed, she is all in.

I am immensely grateful for our partnership and friendship. ☹

Rikki Brodsky

MAKE VOTING A HABIT

Since our founding, NCJW has worked to promote voting rights by advocating for women's suffrage, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, the Motor Voter Act, and beyond. NCJW believes that our vote is our voice, and our democracy is at its strongest when every voice is heard.

The 2022 U.S. elections will be held on Tuesday, November 8, 2022. During this midterm election year, all 435 seats in the House of Representatives and 35 of the 100 seats in the Senate will be contested. Midterm elections occur halfway between presidential elections.

Perhaps more important than the general elections are the primaries taking place on June 28, 2022, that will actually determine which candidates appear on the ballot in November.

There are dozens of articles, predictions, poll results, conjectures, and guesses on the projected outcomes of the November 2022 midterm election. The League of Women Voters has an informative website that includes announcements of candidate forums, help in registering to vote, links and positions, and other guidance to assist you in becoming an informed and habitual voter (see <https://www.lwv-rma.org/>).

At this fabulous website, https://ballotpedia.org/Sample_Ballot_Lookup, you can immediately see the names of incumbents and challengers in

your district and in all New York State offices on June 28, 2022. If you're feeling particularly daring, you can click on a candidate's name to see what he/she stands for.

Unfortunately, many consider midterm primaries and elections boring – and turnout usually is abysmal. But the reality is that low voter turnout can allow candidates you would have never thought worthy to sneak onto the ballot. You don't have to be an expert on issues or candidates to fulfill

your civic responsibilities. You can spend 15 minutes visiting the websites suggested here to realize that there is a relatively small number of offices and candidates about which to become educated. Or you can surprise yourself by spending even more time learning the fascinating nitty gritty of elections.

Regardless of the depth of your interest, take some time to be informed and VOTE! ☹

Mollie Traub

GRAPE AND NCJWGRS, Continued Collaboration on *ElderPages Directory*

I have represented NCJWGRS on the board of the Greater Rochester Area Partnership for the Elderly (GRAPE) and on the ElderPages Directory Committee since 1994. GRAPE connects elder care professionals through networking, educational programs and advocacy. In the early 1980s, NCJWGRS initiated and published the first *Guide to Nursing Homes in Monroe County*, generously funded by the Daisy Marquis Jones Foundation. Every four years since NCJW and GRAPE began collaborating, committee members have written grants to help pay for updating and printing *The ElderPages Directory* (www.theelderpages.com). We've received funding from The John F. Wegman Fund, the Greater Rochester Health Foundation, Ames Amzalak Memorial Trust and, most consistently, the Daisy Marquis Jones Foundation.

Because of NCJW's long association with the Daisy

Marquis Jones Foundation, we applied again, and recently received the wonderful news that the foundation has granted the \$26,000 we requested for updating and printing 15,000 hard copies of the directory. These directories will be distributed to senior centers, social workers, case managers, hospitals and others that use them. This printing will contain extensive information on services for low-income seniors living in the City of Rochester.

The Greater Rochester Section will receive \$1,300 for our role in writing the Daisy Marquis Jones Foundation grant, and GRAPE will receive the rest to pay for the updating and printing.

The ElderPages Directory is the most comprehensive listing of senior services in the county, and I'm proud to play a role in helping it to remain so. ☹

Mollie Traub

PARTNERSHIP WITH ROCHESTER REGIONAL COALITION AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING



Rochester Regional Coalition AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING

www.rrcaht.org

Educate • Advocate • Liberate

NCJWGRS became coalition partners with the Rochester Regional Coalition against Human Trafficking (RCCAHT) in 2014. Since that year, we have supported the group with our annual membership and I have been the participating representative for NCJWGRS.

Here is an update on the coalition's work:

- In 2021, the coalition held its 5th Annual National Human Trafficking and National Slavery Awareness Day event. Representatives from the New York State Senate, U.S. House of Representatives, City of Rochester, and Town of Brighton presented RCCAHT with Proclamations of Recognition for its outreach and educational work. The Awareness Day included an excellent discussion about legislative concerns facing the anti-trafficking movement.
- Over the year, RCCAHT presented two webinars, one on the weaponization of trafficking and the other on activism and burnout. You can find links to these at rrcaht.org.

- The coalition gave donations from its survivor fund to local victims of human trafficking to assist in covering small expenses.
- The coalition received donated packages of personal care items from the children of Temple Sinai and donated them to The Center for Youth's Street Outreach and Safe Harbour programs.
- Representatives of RCCAHT attended outdoor, in-person events, where they set up tables and shared educational information and conversation with community attendees. These events included the

Community Health Fair, National Night Out, and Call to Women of Color Social Gathering.

- President Dr. Celia McIntosh was the recipient of the inaugural DAISY Award for Nurses Advancing Health Equity. Dr. McIntosh was honored for her impact, through RCCAHT, on community awareness of human rights and for being a "tireless advocate for the Black and Brown community."
- In January 2022, the coalition held its inaugural Human Trafficking and Social Justice Conference virtually; it was well-attended and featured a variety of exceptional speakers.

You can find information about RCCAHT at its website, rrcaht.org. There you can learn even more about its work and become a subscriber to the quarterly newsletter. ≧

Gina Horowitz



*Tribute
Cards*

Please contact **Cathy Schneider** at 586-7575 to order tribute cards, a meaningful way to honor life cycle events and support NCJW projects.

Remember to check out our website for the latest news: ncjwgrs.org

Mark your calendar!

A LIVE NCJWGRS P.A.D. Party
Sunday, May 1
10 a.m.

Temple B'rith Kodesh Adult Lounge
(Enter through Door I on the west side of the building)

For the past two years, we have held successful "virtual" parties, including last year's March PADness event. Now that many of us feel more comfortable going out again, we are excited to announce a May 1 in-person P.A.D. Party.

We will use the money that members donated for the 2-22-22 P.A.D. fundraiser to purchase some of the supplies and ask that you bring individually wrapped pads (not bladder control) and tampons to the party. We will supply liners and refreshments.

We'll donate the completed kits to these agencies:

Mothers in Need of Others (MINO), a program that works with case workers and churches by providing emergency items to case managers and church outreach workers for families in crisis.

Pencils and Paper, a program of Jewish Family Service that provides teachers with free classroom supplies. Our kits go to teachers, who help individual students in need.

Brighton Food Cupboard, also a program of Jewish Family Service. It appreciates receiving year-round food and non-food items, including feminine hygiene products. ☺





National Council of Jewish Women
Greater Rochester Section

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Rochester, NY 14692

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MISSION STATEMENT

The National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW) is a grassroots organization of volunteers and advocates who turn progressive ideals into action. Inspired by Jewish values, NCJW strives for social justice by improving the quality of life for women, children, and families and by safeguarding individual rights and freedoms.