

Welcoming the 2019 Gvanim Cohort

In 2000, the Jewish Community Federation and Endowment Fund founded a program called Gvanim ("hues," in Hebrew) in response to the deep divisions in Israeli society symbolized by the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin by a Jewish religious extremist. The program has worked for many years to strengthen Israel's democracy by creating a cadre of leaders to spread the message of Jewish pluralism to ever-widening circles of Israelis. In the past few years, the program has evolved to include leaders from across Israeli society—Jewish and non-Jewish—who are invested in a shared vision for Israel's future, meaning they see Israel's diversity as an asset in building a democratic and shared society with equity for all of Israel's citizens.

This year's Gvanim cohort includes participants from ultra-Orthodox, religious Zionist, secular Jewish, and Arab communities. The program takes place over the course of a year with workshops in Israel that allow the group to get to know their peers in their own communities, plus facilitated conversations about any and all issues that come up throughout that process. The program culminates with a trip to the United States where the group has the opportunity to explore how other communities address similar issues, such as embracing ethnic and religious diversity, and the progress and challenges of creating a more democratic and shared society.

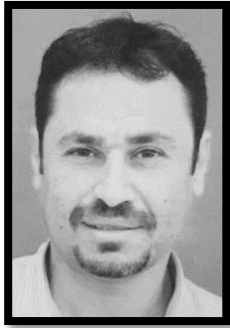
During their time in San Francisco and surrounding communities on March 24-27, the goal is to showcase the diversity of the Bay Area and its reputation for being a liberal and accepting place. Together they will explore how different settings, such as religious institutions, education systems, and government, build an inclusive community and advance equity in the Bay Area.

Gvanim Cohort 15



Louis Abou Sweid is from Ka'abiyye, a Bedouin village in the Lower Galilee. Louis works in the Association for Released Soldiers in the Ministry of Defense and is the founder of Ansam, a nonprofit organization for the promotion of social and educational activities amongst Arab youngsters and Bedouins in particular, to help them integrate into society. He holds a B.A. in Education and Mathematics and an M.A. in Public Administration, with specialization in National Security, from the University of Haifa.

He recently returned to the classroom and is currently in his second year of law at the Academic Center for Law and Science (Sha'arei Mishpat College). He has won various awards in appreciation of his social and public activity, including the President's Voluntary Award for 2013 from President Shimon Peres, and the Outstanding Worker's Award in public services for 2016 from President Reuven Rivlin. He is married with three children.



Raji Alkarem is the principal of Ort Abu Tlul High School in the Negev. Raji has spent his professional career as a teacher, educator, and grassroots organizer in the Bedouin community. He currently works as an academic counselor supporting high performing Bedouin youth. He also served as parole officer for the Hura local council and in this role, led programs to educate parents and teachers on the high dropout rate and developed programs to encourage continuing education.

Raji holds two master's degrees in Educational Counseling and Management & Dispute Settlement from Ben Gurion University. He is a social activist who works at an organization serving the unrecognized villages in the Bedouin community where he meets with many Jewish groups to discuss these villages and the possibility of exposing them to Israeli society.

Raji is also a founder of Desert Stars, a nonprofit organization focused on empowering high performing Bedouin youth through leadership training and development.

He is a sports fan, particularly of racing and soccer, and is married with five children.



Shira Buchris-Bazak was born and raised in Qiryat Gat. Shira studied in Bar-Ilan University's doctoral program in the fields of Talmud and Halakhah. She is an academic lecturer and a researcher in social sciences and is currently a postdoctoral researcher at the Interdisciplinary Center in Herzliya at the School of Psychology.

For three years, she volunteered at the absorption camp, "Hulda", where she resided amongst Ethiopian immigrants and helped them manage their daily lives by familiarizing herself with their culture, language, and special needs.

During her national service, Shira volunteered at the Children's Department of Eitanim, a psychiatric hospital as well as the local school dedicated to hospitalized children. For 17 years, she worked as an educational consultant and supervisor of educational counselors in the social and geographic periphery of the Negev. During this period, she developed a model for team and systemic work and led processes of change in the fields of content and education.

Shira managed a forum entitled *Jewish Culture* that was designated for city residents who were interested in traditional culture. For a decade, she was a member of the Board of Directors of Marian Early Childhood and Family Center.

She is married to Noam and they have seven children together.



Yitzhak Fredman grew up in the Haredi-Litai community, and in recent years has been working at the state attorney's office, having come a long way out of the security of the Haredi work environment into the general work world. Even today, the fact that he is a Haredi employee in a different workplace, is challenging. This reality presents many difficulties and deliberations in both worlds.

Yitzhak finds great value in the advancement of tools, solutions, and frameworks to facilitate those of the Haredi community who are interested in and need to integrate into the labor market.



Zevick Gorodetsky was born in 1976 in Kfar Gidon, a religious moshav in the Jezreel Valley. He is a graduate of Film and Television Studies at Tel Hai College in the Upper Galilee and is currently a documentary filmmaker and executive producer at Teddy Productions, one of Israel's leading production companies.

His work includes documentary films such as *The Amazing Journey, He is My God, Too* about a gay marriage and the connection between Judaism and sexual identity, *Home, Back and Forth* about the musician, Idan Raichel, and more.

He serves as a freelance consultant (flying producer) for Keshet International, supporting the adaptation of Israeli television formats to various countries around the world, mainly in the Balkans, Southeast Asia, and South America.

Zevick lives in Tel Aviv with his partner, Itamar Yakhin.



Pinchas Gurt, at 30 years old, is a resident of Jerusalem. He is a graduate of Emek Halacha Yeshiva in Haifa and the Sfat Emet Yeshiva in Jerusalem. He holds an LL.B. degree from Ono Academic College (summa cum laude) and finished LL.M. from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

Pinchas served as a mortgage advisor in 2009-2012 and later as a family counselor for the Pa'amonim Association in 2012-2014. In the framework of his undergraduate studies, he participated in the "Matzpen" program in Knesset and assisted MK Dr. Adi Kol in her parliamentary work. His internship was in the District Attorney's Office in Jerusalem, under the guidance of the District

Attorney. After his Bar association certification, he continued to work here for several months. Later, in February 2016, he was hired as a lawyer to work in the High Court of Justice Department of the State Attorney's Office and continues to do so today. He is married with three children.



Rachely Hartal is Director of the Graduate Program of Ma'ase, an Israeli NGO that advances equal opportunities and leadership for young adults in the periphery of Israel. This program offers mentorship to academic graduates, promotes vocational training, and helps young adults without family support. She has worked at Ma'ase for the past 7 years. Rachely holds a B.A. in Social Science and the Humanities from the Open University and an M.A. in Gender Studies from Bar-Ilan University.

Before working at Ma'ase, Rachely was a guide for Bina, the Jewish Movement for Social Change, for the Ben Gurion Heritage Institute, and a team coordinator for the Jewish Agency for Israel. Rachely is

mostly interested in Israeli socio-political processes and national, ethnic, class and gender intersections within Israel.

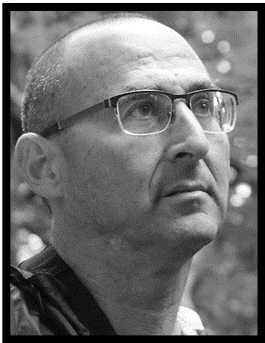


Roni Hazon-Weiss, at 34 years old, was born in Jerusalem and grew up in Ma'ale Adumim. She served in the IDF as an officer in the Teaching Corps. Her bachelor's degree is in Democratic Education and she is currently finishing her master's degree in Women, Talmud, and Halacha Studies at the Schechter Institute.

Roni is a member of several social organizations, including holding a seat on the board of directors in the Ne'emanei Torah VaAvodah movement and the Yerushalmit movement. She is also a co-founder and leadership member of the Teachers Movement. As a religious feminist and social activist, she is one of the leaders of the struggle against the exclusion of women from the public sphere in Jerusalem and for freedom in the Mikve.

Roni started her career as a teacher in the public-school system and is now in her third year as principal of Dror, a six-year public religious pluralistic high school in Jerusalem. This school is the only co-ed high school in the religious school system in Jerusalem and maybe even in Israel. In her new role she promotes values of social justice, gender equality, and democracy, while encouraging individuality, choice, dialogue, and leadership.

She is married to Nachie and is the mother of two children, Yuval and Carmel.



Yankee Ilovitch is a lawyer who works at the Israel Union Bank Ltd. as the CEO of a subsidiary in the capital and credit market. He is one of the founders of the Modi'in Integrative School and has been active for many years as part of the organization's management.

Yankee is occasionally overwhelmed by the phenomena of intolerance and is thrilled to witness caring and sensitivity and the willingness to live together.

Yankee is married to Eti and has three boys and a girl.

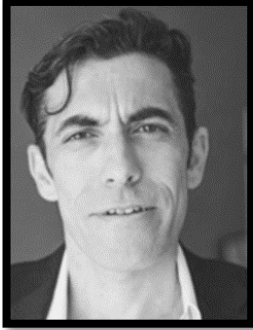


Since 2011, **Yael Luz** has been working as a program director at Beit Daniel, a center for progressive and Reform Judaism. The majority of her job is integrating Jewish traditional concepts with contemporary Israeli daily life; to constantly rejuvenate the community by emphasizing the importance of a progressive Jewish community, which is open and equal to all.

Prior to Beit Daniel, Yael worked at Alma, a home for Hebrew culture where she also ran programs on the topic of Jewish identity.

Yael has volunteered at the ARDC (African Refugee Development Center), where she went through a short course to help refugees get asylum in Israel. That same year, she also went through a course with Amnesty Israel on social lobbying for refugees.

Yael's B.A. is in Arts and Design. Her personal background and journey have led her to link old traditions with the creation of new ones; bringing together diverse groups of people, contributing to programs of social justice, and always aspiring for change.



Ofer Namimi Ha-Levi has initiated and developed projects and organizations with commitments to cultural renewal and social change in Israel and all over the world. In 2000, he was the director of Hillel programs at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and in 2003 he was appointed to serve as the founding director of Hillel at Ben Gurion University of the Negev. In 2004, he received the Richard M. Joel Hillel Badge of Excellence.

In 2006, Ofer was chosen to participate in the Avi Chai Fellowship Program *Tehuda* where he initiated a vision to establish Hillel Centers for cultural renewal and social change in the Negev and the Galilee. In 2008, he was appointed as VP of Content and Strategic Development of Hillel Israel.

Ofer's commitment to social rights and Jewish renewal prompted him to embark on a two-year mission in 2012 as Director of the Project TEN Service Learning Program in Hyderabad, India, which motivated dozens of young Jews from Israel and the world to live, study, and volunteer together in social organizations in India.

In 2014, immediately upon his return to Israel, Ofer began his role as CEO of Tikkun–Movement for the Renewal of Society and Culture in Israel. In addition, he advised and lectured in the fields of identity, culture, and society in various frameworks, and later joined the Alliance Israelite Universelle as a program development manager in the Social Resilience Division.

Today he is the Director of the Knowledge, Research, and Training Department of the Ma'ase Action Center for Social Mobility for Young People from the Social Periphery in Israel.



Tirza Peleg is a community and social responsibility project manager, having established and managed community engagement projects at organizations and companies like Elbit Systems, Clalit Health Services, and the Azrieli Foundation.

She holds an M.B.A in Management of Nonprofit Organizations from Haifa University and a B.A in Far East Studies from Hebrew University.

Tirza grew up in "Hashomer Hatsair," a secular kibbutz in the north of Israel, and holds a secular Zionist world view along with a great belief in democracy as an equal and enabling space.

She is married to a traditional Mizrahi man and they have three children. They live in Kfar Sava and within their home, Tirza educates for tolerance and acceptance of others, regardless of their outlook, beliefs, way of life or choices.



Sukina Sawaed was born in Shibli village in the north of Israel and now lives in Kamanneh, a Bedouin village also in the north. Sukina studied Tourism and Hospitality and worked as a teacher of tourism trends in high schools, plus trained teachers for tourism professions.

She is also an educational counselor in an elementary school in the village of Salameh and a regional instructor in the prevention of violence in schools.

Sukina is a social activist in her village. She helped establish the "Parents Council" in her community, whose goal is to promote education and welfare in the community, as well as equality and advancement of women's status. She is also involved with the Mirsat Center of Socio-Economic Development.

Sukina is married to Muhammad and is the mother of three children: Zainab, Haya, and Mahanad.



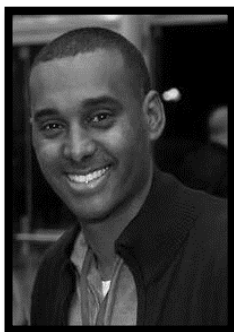
Limor Yaakov-Safrai was raised in Gan Or, a settlement in Gush Katif, for 22 years. When she was pregnant at age 24, she and her entire family left Gush Katif during the Israeli disengagement from Gaza.

She has a B.A. in Criminology and Sociology and an M.A. in Sociology of Education. She also has a teaching diploma in Literature and Social Sciences. Limor has always engaged in formal and informal education. She educates children and youth to become more socially active and she teaches religious tolerance, mutual respect, and social solidarity.

Today she is a member of Kibbutz Ma'ale Gilboa. She practices and believes in a life of 'work and Torah' and is the Youth and Education Department Manager for the 'Kibbutz Hadati' movement.

In her free time, she is socially active in the areas of religious feminism, the fight to abolish prostitution, empowering Mizrahi traditions in the religious Zionist movement, and communal-kibbutz work. In the upcoming elections, she will be running to represent Ma'ale Gilboa in the Emek HaMaayanot regional council.

She is married to Aviad and is the mother of four children.

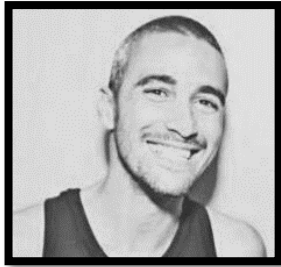


Meny Yaso is a social entrepreneur who sees sports as a channel of empowering underprivileged kids and youth. As an educator and certified soccer coach, Meny gained the insight that soccer training and games can be used to leverage social and humanistic values and have long-term positive impact on players' well-being and academic achievement.

In 2007, after several years of coaching in professional soccer clubs, Meny founded Maccabi Ashkelon's Soccer Academy. The academy operates youth soccer teams in underprivileged neighborhoods and provides them with training while teaching them values for social and personal growth. The academy also encourages family members to join games and training for strengthening family bonding and developing a sense of pride among community members. As the academy's manager, Meny leads its training methodology and educational attitude, manages the staff, and deals with raising money

through sponsorships and supportive partners. Additionally, Meny is a project manager who runs educational programs for the Ministry of Education.

Meny holds an M.A. in Business Administration as well as a B.A. in Education.



Guy Zuzut is an Israeli educator and social entrepreneur. He was born in 1980 in the Hatikva neighborhood in southern Tel Aviv to a Jewish family with roots in Morocco and Iraq.

He is the co-founder of Menash, a Tel Aviv-Jaffa network of youth-led neighborhood centers aimed to empower city youth in an innovative and supporting environment. While at Menash, he led a team of community organizers, educators and urban activists in 20 youth centers across the city.

Guy was an active teenager in his local community center growing up. After serving as a Sergeant in the IDF's Nachal troop, he went back to lead the local scouts, while also serving as a social counselor for youth in prison. He has a B.A. in Democratic Education and an M.A in Education Policy from Tel Aviv University's School of Education. His life philosophy is that the universal and Jewish ideas of Tikkun Olam begin with "Tikkun Habayit" – fixing the "home" of the individual, which allows one to later change his neighborhood, the state, and the world.

Today Guy is the Director of the Bet Dani Community Center, which is where he grew up as a child. He was also one of the founders of the municipal Rov Hair movement of young adults, which is currently a delegate in the Israeli Labour party.

Guy is the proud father of 4-year-old twins, Matan and Gil.