



Dear JCC Members & Friends,

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Minnesota JCC (JCC), and the Board of Directors of the Minnesota JCC Foundation (Foundation), we are thrilled to share some exciting changes happening within our JCC. As part of a strategic plan to enhance fundraising capacity and bolster operational excellence, the Board of Directors of the JCC has established a new executive leadership structure across both organizations, which will take effect on March 29, 2024.

Under this new structure, Michael Waldman will formally step down as the CEO of the Minnesota JCC, yet continue to serve as **Chief Executive Officer of the Minnesota JCC Foundation** – a role that will be expanded to retain oversight of the fundraising and development components associated with his current role. Michael will also continue to manage the Foundation’s governance and lead capital and endowment fund development to support JCC programs and facilities. *Read more about Michael below.*

Stephanie Chauss, the JCC’s highly effective COO, will serve in the redefined role of **Chief Executive Officer of the Minnesota JCC**. Stephanie will lend her extensive expertise to meeting the JCC’s mission, vision, and values by leading initiatives, strengthening operations, supervising and mentoring staff, ensuring that high quality programs and services reach the community, and interfacing with members and the extended community as a whole. *Read more about Stephanie below.*

The Minnesota JCC’s Board of Directors is committed to facilitating a smooth transition of leadership and to working alongside our valued staff over the next six weeks and beyond. In the meantime, please share in our joy and excitement as we welcome in a new era of leadership that will elevate the JCC in myriad ways and enhance our capacity to serve our JCC community.

Sincerely,

Roz Segal, President
Minnesota JCC Board of Directors

Norman Abramson, President
Minnesota JCC Foundation Board of Director

boardpresident@minnesotajcc.org

More about Michael Waldman...

For over 28 years, Michael Waldman has successfully served in various JCC leadership roles in both Texas and Minnesota. After serving as the Executive Director of the St. Paul JCC for 10 years, and then as the shared Executive of the Minneapolis JCC and the St. Paul JCC for 2 years, Michael proudly became the first CEO of the Minnesota JCC in 2021, when the Twin Cities JCC’s merged under his leadership. In that same year, Michael became CEO of the Minnesota JCC Foundation, a distinct 501(c)(3) non-profit organization established to fund the JCC’s programs and services and manage its properties. Michael’s commitment to combining into one Minnesota JCC and establishing the Minnesota JCC Foundation is indicative of his visionary approach to leveraging resources for the greater good, and solidifying a sustainable business model for generations to come.

Among an extensive list of achievements, Michael’s passion for, and deep expertise in, fundraising has been instrumental in shaping the JCC and guiding many of the important initiatives that have allowed it to flourish. Under his leadership, the JCC experienced unprecedented increases in donations including tripling previous goals through the annual campaign. In 2015, he led the St. Paul community on a multi-year capital campaign to raise over \$16 million dollars for facility renovation and improvements, resulting in a 125% increase in JCC membership and revenue. Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, Michael and the JCC Fund Development team secured millions of unbudgeted dollars from families, individuals, foundations and government sources to help sustain the JCC through the market downturn, positioning the JCC to thrive as the market began to return.

Now, Michael will focus his efforts on leading the Minnesota JCC Foundation to build endowments for all of the JCC’s important programs, services, and facilities, and broaden the possibilities for growth and expansion in the future, while continuing to support the Minnesota JCC’s outstanding fund development team in growing our annual fundraising impact.

More about Stephanie Chauss...

Stephanie Chauss has served as a dynamic leader of non-profit organizations for over 25 years. Her wide-ranging achievements stretch from strategic leadership, operational innovation, fiscal responsibility, and mission-critical tactics to fruitful community partnerships, philanthropic growth, and community engagement. Prior to becoming the Chief Operating Officer at the Minnesota JCC, Stephanie served as the Senior Vice President of the YMCA of the Greater Twin Cities. In this role, she oversaw 32 YMCA locations, 10 day camps, 13 early childhood centers, and 55 school-age care sites. Stephanie led a team of 7,000 full-time, part-time and seasonal staff, collectively focused on retention, engagement, and delivering high quality programs and services. Among an extensive list of successes, Stephanie exceeded the YMCA’s financial targets year after year, totaling \$128M.

During her tenure at the Minnesota JCC thus far, Stephanie’s operational excellence has propelled programs and systems forward, enabling the JCC to overcome challenges, strengthen its foundation, and serve the community through engaging, meaningful, and innovative offerings. Stephanie oversees the operations associated with the JCC’s key program areas including Early Childhood, Health & Wellness, Jewish Arts & Culture, Life Enrichment, and Youth, Teen, and Camping. She has reimaged the structures and processes associated with finance, security, facilities, marketing, communications, and information systems to maximize resources and lay the groundwork for new, forward-thinking projects. Among other initiatives, she supervised the “refresh” of the Sabes Center and has enhanced safety and security across the organization.

Stephanie has served on numerous boards and committees including the St. Paul JCC (Executive, Program, Renovation and Expansion, and Membership Committees), and was honored to serve as the St. Paul JCC Board President. She then co-chaired the JCC Combination Steering Committee which resulted in the unified Minnesota JCC. Stephanie has served on the board of Mount Zion Temple, Downtown District Council, the St. Paul Chamber of Commerce, and Lions Club.

Stephanie will now lend her strategic vision and operational expertise to supporting the entirety of the JCC and extended community.
