

THE **COLLABORATIVE**
FOR **JEWISH ORGANIZING**



IMPACT REPORT

SPRING 2025

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This Moment

We stand in the midst of the burning world,
Primed to burn with compassionate love and justice,
To turn inward and find holy fire at the core,
To turn outward and see the world that is all
Of one flesh with us, see under the trash, through
The smog, the furry bee in the apple blossom,
The trout leaping, the candles our ancestors lit for us.

– from *Nishmat*, by Marge Piercy

As we write this, Piercy’s image of standing in the midst of the burning world is all too literal, as the federal government focuses on dehumanizing and attacking immigrants and trans people, ransacking the treasury to benefit millionaires, and undermining democracy. It is a difficult time. And yet for those of us who see the world as “all of one flesh with us,” it is a time to resist despair, a time to remember the candles our ancestors lit for us, a time to strengthen ties and pursue sustained and strategic action.

Informed by Jewish history, and by the Holocaust in particular, American Jews are highly attuned to the dangers of authoritarianism, the threats of dehumanization, and attacks on the rule of law. Familiar warning signs now are motivating many Jews to take action. At the same time, because of increased antisemitism and fear-inducing messaging from key actors, many Jews are afraid. The fear can lead to an impulse to isolate or withdraw from multi-racial spaces and agendas. The work of the Collaborative’s member organizations provides an antidote to that impulse, helping Jews stay in partnership with the much wider, multiracial “we” and seek safety where it truly lies – in the broad coalition of all those who value justice and equity.

Just weeks into the second Trump administration, Collaborative organizations are demonstrating their determination and ability to take action, protecting people under attack, building community, and strengthening bonds of solidarity. Just a few early examples include organizing a rally with hundreds of people in support of immigrants at the Maryland state capitol; partnering with a teacher’s union to launch and co-chair a state-based “Fight Back” table in Massachusetts; developing a new interfaith action network in North Carolina; and absorbing hundreds of new and existing members in New York City, offering both community and opportunities to engage in sustained action in support of immigrants and trans people.

Who we are

The Collaborative is made up of Bend the Arc: A Jewish Partnership for Justice, The Religious Action Center of the Union for Reform Judaism (RAC), Carolina Jews for Justice (CJJ), Detroit Jews for Justice (DJJ), Jewish Alliance for Law and Social Action (JALSA, Massachusetts), Jewish Community Action (JCA, Minnesota), Jewish Council on Urban Affairs (JCUA, Illinois), Jews for Racial and Economic Justice Community (JFREJ, New York), Jews United for Justice (D.C. & Maryland).

Block and Build

“Block and Build” is a core strategic frame in pro-justice, pro-democracy movements: we use our organizing and advocacy tools to block inhumane and anti-democratic initiatives, while simultaneously building toward the future we envision. At the state and local level there continue to be opportunities to advance visionary initiatives that improve the material conditions of millions of people and help bring a better future into being. “Building” also includes growing our numbers, strengthening the skills of our volunteers, enhancing our strategies and tactics, and creating greater alignment with partners - which will increase our power to advance change in the future. We block and we build. These strategies work together. Indeed, policies and programs that we built during the first Trump administration are continuing to protect people, blocking some of the current administration’s harmful initiatives.

One example: From 2018 to 2020, Jews United for Justice (JUFJ) was a key part of a comprehensive Maryland campaign to protect immigrants by limiting local law enforcement’s collaboration with federal immigration authorities. Building on national momentum and on the strength of years of partnership in Maryland, the campaign succeeded, shifting policy and practice in both the county and statewide. In 2019, in the middle of the campaign, Howard County Maryland had a contract with federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to detain immigrants in the county jail. Though the county’s leadership was not aligned with the Trump administration’s attacks on immigrants, county leaders justified the contract because of the revenue it generated.



JUFJ leaders protest immigrant detentions in Maryland on Tisha B'Av

In response, JUFJ organized several actions. The largest took place on *Tisha B'Av*, a Jewish holy day of fasting and mourning. Five hundred people turned out for the protest, which included civil disobedience, blocking entrance to the jail. This county action was part of a broader campaign to enact state legislation to end collaboration with ICE and to make building ICE facilities much more difficult. The organizing highlighted the conflict between the county’s practice and their values orientation, leading the county executive to cancel the contract, in advance of the bill passing in the state legislature. The state legislation remains in place, protecting immigrants today.

The 2024 election results require us to do everything we can both to block unjust initiatives and to advance equitable policies and build our power to improve the conditions of people’s lives. This is what we do, with long term commitment and persistence. This report shares a few highlights both of wins in 2024 and of ongoing campaigns. We begin with an overview of the Collaborative.

Overview of the Collaborative

The Collaborative for Jewish Organizing is a network of nine independent organizations working in sixteen states and the District of Columbia. We organize Jews and non-Jewish allies to work in partnership with communities of color to advance social, racial, and economic justice. The work of Collaborative member organizations involves three intertwined elements:

1) Organizing and building Jewish community, forging bonds that enable and inspire people to participate, as Jews, in social justice;

2) Contributing as Jews to multiracial coalitions that win policy victories which improve the material conditions of millions of people most affected by inequality and structural oppression, we build power across campaigns, elections, and issues;

3) Creating relationships of trust in multiracial coalitions, forging connections that undergird social justice work and play a crucial role in helping to navigate conflict and stay aligned, in a time of government-promoted xenophobia, antisemitism, Islamophobia, racism, sexism, and transphobia.

The three braided elements of our work reinforce each other. What we and our partners are building is foundational to creating a true multiracial democracy. Collaborative member groups have worked intensively with partner groups for decades, on such interrelated issues as criminal justice reform and community safety, immigrant rights,

housing justice, tax fairness, health care, domestic worker rights, civic engagement, voting rights, and democracy.

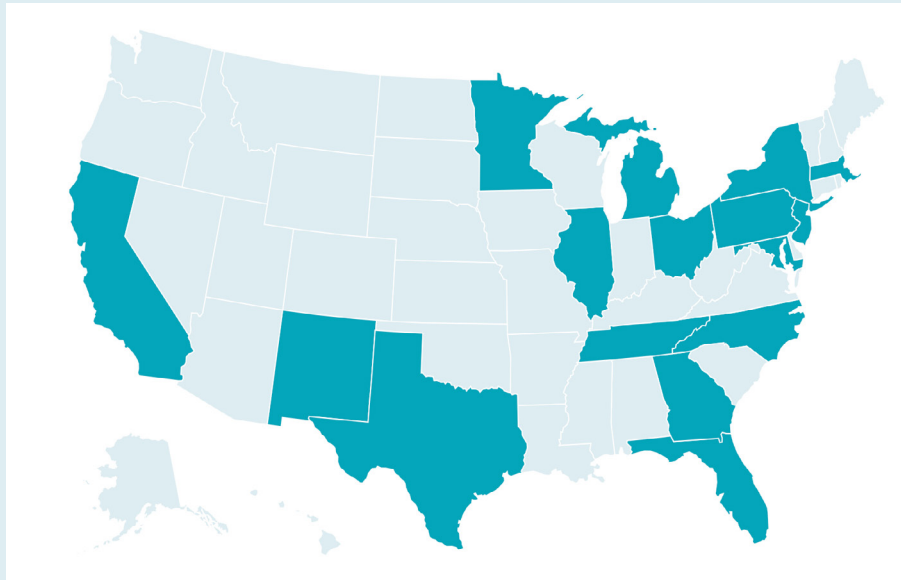
The importance of these partnerships has become even more salient with the ascendancy of anti-democratic forces in the U.S. and the war in Israel and Gaza which began in October, 2023. As authoritarianism rises in the United States, a united front to defend democracy and civil society is of crucial importance. Powerful, durable, trusting relationships equip our organizations to

provide political homes for Jews while working with partners to prevent and repair fractures, and build toward a future where all can thrive.

We work in pursuit of racial and economic justice, in alignment with the deep Jewish values of welcoming the stranger and protecting the vulnerable.

Our organizing manifests the core Jewish values of *b'tzelem elohim* – sacred human dignity – the understanding that every life is of utmost value, and belief in our ability to join together to be agents of justice and liberation.

The largest formation of its kind, the Collaborative for Jewish Organizing supports its member organizations in their varied local contexts, offering capacity-building and flexible resources across all nine organizations. Funding from the Collaborative is crucial to the stability of our field; meetings of colleagues from around the country are a regular source of learning and inspiration; and communications and organizing support provided by the Collaborative bolsters each organization by strengthening their staff. The Collaborative has become a powerful resource for our field.



Collaborative organizations include small start-ups and long-established entities, and encompass political geographies and Jewish populations as diverse as New York, Detroit, Texas, Minnesota, and North Carolina.

A Focus on the Local, With National Reach: Highlights from 2024

Our organizations are uniquely positioned to engage tens of thousands of Jews in to participate in communities' responses to unjust federal dictates and to move forward the work of justice.

DEMOCRACY, CIVIL RIGHTS, AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT: IMPORTANT WINS AND ONGOING WORK

Our work protecting democracy takes many forms, including protecting civil rights, voting rights, and expanding civic engagement. We saw important advances in 2024 in these areas on the state and local levels.

Equal Rights Amendment Enshrined in New York State Constitution - RAC-NY and JFREJ

Though New York is seen as a pro-democracy stronghold, anti-democratic forces have been on the rise. This added to the urgency in 2024 to enshrine the right to abortion and other civil rights in the state constitution, ensuring that New York would protect not only the four million New Yorkers of child-bearing age, but also that New York could be a haven for those who may need refuge from other states' abortion bans and attacks on queer and trans people.

Both RAC-NY and JFREJ contributed to this victory. Twenty-eight RAC-affiliated congregations participated in the campaign, sending thousands of postcards and participating in phone banks and "friend-banks," talking to voters who did not know about the proposed amendment, and getting them to pledge to vote in favor. JFREJ helped lead "Jews for Prop 1," hosting phone banks and street canvasses. On election day, JFREJ canvassed at a location where an anti-Prop 1 group had plastered flyers with hateful anti-trans messaging. The visible presence of JFREJ volunteers provided a needed antidote and a powerful expression of support for inclusion.

AMENDMENT TO THE NEW YORK STATE CONSTITUTION

Effective January 1, 2025, the New York State Constitution includes protections against discrimination "by any other person or by any firm, corporation, or institution, or by the state or any agency" based on "race, color, ethnicity, national origin, age, disability, creed, religion, or sex, including sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, pregnancy outcomes, and reproductive healthcare and autonomy."

This language represents a significant expansion of protected groups in the state constitution, which formerly included only race, color, creed, and religion, and it ensures a wide array of rights, including the right to an abortion.



Volunteers make calls during a #YesOnProp1 phone bank session



JFREJ members canvass in October 2024

Every Voice, Every Vote – The RAC’s Nationwide Civic Engagement Campaign



*A postcard party at Rockdale Temple in Ohio
(Credit: Union for Reform Judaism)*

In addition to the work to pass the ERA in New York, the RAC organized a national civic engagement campaign called “Every Voice, Every Vote,” to expand affordable housing and to protect democracy, climate, and reproductive rights. The campaign reached nearly 1 million voters nationwide.

In support of abortion access, the RAC and Women of Reform Judaism mobilized over 8,500 Reform Jews to reach more than 155,000 voters. These efforts included phone and text banks, post-carding parties, congregational meetings, canvassing, rallies, and individual outreach, helping to secure abortion rights in Arizona, Colorado, Maryland, Nevada, and New York.

The Baltimore is Not for Sale Campaign – JUFJ

Question H on the Baltimore city ballot would have cut the size of the Baltimore City Council in half. The measure was put on the ballot by the billionaire owner of the right-wing Sinclair Broadcast Group who sought to shape Baltimore in service to his interests. Measure H, had it passed, would have reduced representation for Baltimoreans, making it harder for grassroots candidates to run and win a seat on the council; harder for organizing groups like JUFJ to have an impact on district elections; harder for constituents to reach and get support from their council representatives; and easier for monied interests to have their way in all decisions affecting the city.

Defeating a ballot measure in Baltimore is quite challenging. Of the last 100 ballot measures in Baltimore, only one had been voted down. An immense people-powered campaign was needed to defeat Question H, and that is what JUFJ created with its partners, helping to establish and anchor the Baltimore City is Not For Sale Campaign. JUFJ’s Baltimore team worked alongside partners, leaders, and electeds to build a coalition that mobilized hundreds of volunteer leaders to reach voters across the city.



*JUFJers and partners hold a banner that reads
“Baltimore City is not for Sale”*

The work included coalition-building, leadership development, public education, fundraising, canvassing, training, hiring, door-knocking, presentations, congregation engagement, community events, text banking, navigating challenging legal questions and partner dynamics, poll greeter coordination, and much more. While monied interests spent large sums to pass Question H, JUFJ and its allied people-powered groups were able to defeat it.

Chill Team De-Escalates Violence at a Polling Site – CJJ



CJJers sing along to a guitar outside of a polling site

On Election Day in 2024, El Vinculo Hispano, immigrant partners of North Carolina’s CJJ, were stationed at a polling site in Siler City as part of Blueprint NC’s election protection program. Their assignment was to bring positive energy, voting information, and food, while also being ready to report to a hotline anything problematic or in violation of election rules. CJJ’s Chill Team had been alerted the previous day that this site might have trouble and had mobilized trained de-escalators to be on site for all shifts.

In one incident, El Vinculo volunteers were providing nonpartisan voting information to a voter seeking help when they were interrupted and intimidated by another group. The talk got heated; there was pushing, and the police were called. CJJ Chill Team members recorded the incident

and de-escalated it, ensuring voter safety. The team later provided a report and footage as requested by the County Board of Elections, which subsequently launched an investigation. Based on the work of the Chill Teams, CJJ co-authored an advocacy letter to the state board of elections. The letter was also shared nationally for advocates in other states to adapt and use.

The How Many Stops Act for Police Accountability – JFREJ

JFREJ Community played a crucial role in building public support for the How Many Stops Act, a landmark piece of legislation that requires the NYPD to report on all police stops and consent searches, bringing transparency to an area of policing that has been hidden from public scrutiny, and that subjected New Yorkers, in particular people of color, to unjustified police stops, with all the damage that causes. It took a decade of organizing by JFREJ and its partners – working in the streets, at press conferences, textbanks, online, on the phones, and strategizing behind the scenes – to secure the win, which required overcoming both a mayoral veto and a misinformation campaign that attempted to pit New Yorkers against each other. The passage of the How Many Stops Act brings New York closer to being a place where no one is unjustly targeted by the police, and it demonstrates the power of sustained organizing.



JFREJ members hold a banner at a protest (Credit: Jonas Jarecki)

IMMIGRANT RIGHTS: STANDING WITH OUR IMMIGRANT FAMILY

Since its first days, the Trump administration has pursued its agenda of attacking immigrants with sweeps and raids, attempts to end birthright citizenship, cancelling asylum appointments, and closing down the border with Mexico. Understanding that this moment might come, our groups have been working with immigrant justice partners to protect and support immigrants. Below are just two of many such Collaborative member group initiatives.

Securing Housing and Health Care for Immigrants in Illinois - JCUA

JCUA contributed to a state-wide campaign that secured more than \$800 million – a record-breaking allocation – in the 2024 state budget for shelter and services for new arrivals and to maintain health coverage for undocumented adults over age 42. Also, Illinois created a new state child tax credit – a credit for which those who file taxes but who are not citizens are eligible.

The campaign that brought these gains in Illinois was led by immigrants, undocumented individuals, and immigrant-serving organizations, with JCUA playing a key role. JCUA staff and volunteers led workshops for member synagogues on the priorities of the immigrant justice platform and turned out delegations for multiple lobby days in Springfield. On one notable lobby day, JCUA organized high school youth as part of an intergenerational team to take the day off school to speak to legislators about the importance of all people having access to health care. The students would approach their representatives, saying, “Senator, I missed a day of school to talk to you. Can you spare a few minutes to talk with me?” The youth, with their proximity to friends and family without health care, found it unfathomable that anyone, regardless of immigration status, would be deprived of health care. Their passion was inspiring.



JCUA teens at a lobby day in Springfield

Legislators tend to take note when people not considered directly affected advocate for immigrants. JCUA’s ability to draw on Jewish teachings and engage synagogues reinforced the moral underpinnings of the issue. The lobby days made the difference: after the synagogue meetings, six of the seven state representatives lobbied and all four senators voted in favor of the revenue bills that included the campaign’s immigrant protection measures.

A New Network to Defend Immigrants’ Rights - Bend the Arc

Bend the Arc, HIAS, and the Jewish Council for Public Affairs have joined together to convene a network of Jewish organizations to defend and protect the rights of immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers. The network is working in partnership with immigrant justice organizations and multiplying the Jewish community’s collective power. Jewish communities have a long history of acting in support of immigrants, and this strength is particularly valuable now. All nine Collaborative organizations are participating, along with over a dozen other organizations.

DISMANTLING ANTISEMITISM AND STRENGTHENING DEMOCRACY

Antisemitism hurts Jews. It is also used to deflect blame for the failures of those in power, to remove fundamental freedoms, to engender division and fear, and to weaken democracy. Antisemitism is a core component of white supremacist and white nationalist ideology. Too often, we see bad-faith actors make accusations of antisemitism or draw attention to antisemitic incidents – not primarily to protect Jews – but to divide and weaken social movements.

Such bad-faith uses of antisemitism are on full display in The Heritage Foundation’s “Project Esther” and other initiatives, which use antisemitism as a justification for undermining civil society. Collaborative organizations have been leading the way in teaching elected officials and the broader public an essential both/and: both that we must dismantle antisemitism and that combating antisemitism must not be used to weaken or destroy democracy.



People hold Bend the Arc signs that read
“We are only safe in solidarity”

The entirety of the work of Collaborative members helps fight antisemitism. First, relationships of interdependence and shared struggle – upon which all of our external campaign work depends – create belonging and dispel implicit bias toward Jewish people. Second, we know that historically, economic exploitation and inequality are drivers of antisemitic conspiracy theories, and all our work is focused on improving the material conditions of people’s lives and fighting inequality.

In addition to these foundational interventions, Collaborative organizations also are engaged in deep relational, educational, and messaging work to dismantle antisemitism.

Training and Dialogue to Combat Antisemitism

Antisemitism is a form of oppression that is not well-understood. In the last few years, Collaborative member groups have leveled up their capacity to educate people – elected officials, non-Jewish partners, and yes Jewish communities as well – about antisemitism. This content includes information about Jewish people, antisemitic tropes, the relationship of antisemitism to other forms of oppression, and the ways that antisemitism is woven into attacks on democracy.

In 2024 Collaborative member groups held over fifty training sessions about antisemitism, reaching thousands of people. Some participants were members of the general public, others were elected officials and community partners.

A couple of examples from JCUA’s work in Chicago, the nation’s third largest city, help illuminate how the nature of our work translates into ongoing impact. Because of its years of coalition and campaign work, JCUA is a trusted partner for progressive leaders of all faiths, as well as for Jewish constituents, and for its eighteen partner synagogues. Years ago, JCUA developed a daylong training for its constituents focused on fighting both antisemitism and white supremacy. Building on this, in recent years, JCUA has become a valued resource for non-Jewish partners, particularly elected officials, in understanding and addressing antisemitism. The Chair of the Black Caucus of the Illinois State Senate attended one

of JCUA's full-day trainings, and expressed excitement about bringing JCUA's analysis to the rest of the state legislature. This work with elected officials has also included being in close partnership with Mayor Brandon Johnson, who convened a roundtable discussion to engage with Jewish leaders. Additionally, in early 2025, JCUA held a two-hour in-person training on antisemitism for eight city councilmembers and their staff, and a similar training for the newly-elected Chicago school board.

Messaging Guide for Dismantling Antisemitism - the Collaborative for Jewish Organizing and Bend the Arc

The Collaborative has supported its member organizations through the development, adoption, and dissemination of a messaging guide, written by Sharon Rose Goldtvik and prepared for Bend the Arc, the Collaborative for Jewish Organizing, and its member organizations. As of 2024, the updated and revised Guide now has its own [website](#), increasing accessibility.



[read the full guide here.](#)

With sustained support from the Collaborative, member organizations have internalized the guide, used it in their communications, and shared it with thousands of partners and elected officials. In addition to all the trainings on antisemitism referenced above, Bend the Arc led twenty trainings in 2024 focused on the new guide. These sessions were attended by 2000 people, helping leaders in Jewish organizations, non-Jewish partner organizations, and Jewish communications staff address antisemitism in their organizing work. In the workshops, participants explored real life case studies and practiced interventions that would address antisemitism.

In late 2024, the Collaborative held "Dismantling Antisemitism Messaging Guide" briefings for federal, state, and municipal elected officials and staff, reaching fifty-nine elected officials and staff, from New York, Massachusetts, Maryland, Pennsylvania. We are encouraged by the growing attendance and overwhelmingly positive feedback of these briefings and are scheduling more sessions for elected officials and other audiences in 2025.

FIGHTING WHITE CHRISTIAN NATIONALISM

Rejecting Replacing School Counselors with Religious Chaplains - RAC-Texas

In 2023, Texas became the first state to allow school districts to replace guidance counselors with unlicensed religious chaplains. The policy allows chaplains, funded with tax dollars and with no counseling credentials, to replace school counselors. This policy opens the door to proselytizing in public schools, harming students of diverse faith traditions and undermining the nation's commitment to the separation of religion and state. After the bill passed, each school district - more than 1200 districts statewide - was required to vote on the policy in 2024. The Jewish community became a driving force in fighting this initiative. RAC-TX created a large coalition to oppose the initiative in school districts in the state. The coalition won in all of the districts where it organized. By the end of 2024, thanks in part to RAC-TX's advocacy, the twenty-five largest Texas school districts, representing 1.8 million students, had officially rejected the policy.

The work, however, continues: other states including Florida, Ohio, Maryland, and Georgia are considering laws modeled on Texas's, seeking to advance Christian nationalism, putting children of all religious backgrounds at risk, and denying children the genuine counseling and guidance that they need. The RAC is working to oppose these efforts.

HOUSING JUSTICE

Stopping Illegal Assessments and Foreclosures - DJJ

Since 2009, Wayne County has foreclosed on one-third of Detroit homes, displacing over 100,000 residents based on property assessments that had been illegally inflated. Detroit Jews for Justice is a partner in the Coalition for Property Tax Justice, which aims to stop the inflated assessments and illegal foreclosures and to compensate people whose homes were illegally overassessed. After years of organizing, the coalition won a city council resolution that stops illegal assessments and foreclosures.



DJJ leaders at a rent control protest

In 2024, the group won another major victory when the Michigan Supreme Court held that property owners are entitled to the windfall from tax foreclosure sales regardless of when their house was foreclosed on. The court's decision opens the door for tens of thousands of former property owners to try to get their money back. The Coalition is now working to ensure that no additional homes that qualify for exemptions through city and county programs are foreclosed.

Tenants Win the Right to Organize in Minnesota - JCA

In 2024, Minnesota passed a bill supporting tenants' rights to organize. The new law allows spaces in rental buildings to be used for organizing and prevents landlords from evicting tenants for organizing. The Equity in Place Coalition, of which JCA was a founding member, achieved this victory, with JCA playing a significant role in the campaign, building on its relationships with legislators to garner support.



JCA leaders and partners hold a banner reading "People over Profit"


This campaign is part of ongoing, multi-pronged work by JCA to strengthen tenant rights and build power, including securing funding to provide stipends for tenants working as volunteer organizers. The project evolved further, with tenant organizers adding civic engagement to their scope of work, connecting with neighbors to get out the vote. This kind of engagement has led to victories at the municipal as well as the state level. As one example, in a Minneapolis suburb, the coalition won a thirty day pre- eviction notice - up from the previous seven-day requirement. This new policy and similar ones won elsewhere give tenants a much stronger chance of avoiding displacement and its devastating effects.

FAIR TAXATION, EDUCATION, AND INFRASTRUCTURE – JALSA

In November 2022, the voters of Massachusetts approved a new 4% surtax on income above \$1 million annually, known as the Fair Share Amendment. This new revenue source is constitutionally dedicated to “quality public education and affordable public colleges and universities, and for the repair and maintenance of roads, bridges, and public transportation.” JALSA was active every step of the way, including sitting on the steering committee of Raise Up Massachusetts, the key coalition behind the legislation. We reported on this achievement in a previous impact report – but the work did not stop in 2022.

Since the passage of the constitutional amendment, JALSA and other advocates have held legislators accountable to make sure that all funds are allocated for intended purposes. Initially, the state estimated the revenue from the bill at \$1.2 billion; eventually admitting it was closer to \$2 billion. With advocates on watch, Fair Share revenue is funding investments in free community college, free and expanded bus service, universal free school meals for K-12 students, and millions of dollars for metro-wide transit and child care providers. This story is another example of the need for sustained organizing, and of our member groups’ ability to deliver over time.

The power of relationships



The secret sauce actually works. If you spend years and years working with people, fighting for social, economic, environmental, and racial justice, they see our Jewish values in action. This is far more educational than any PowerPoint about antisemitism. As a result of these relationships, our allies have been outspoken about antisemitism, with several groups issuing statements after October 7, reflecting an understanding about how this was a moment that they knew we needed their support... There is true understanding here that hate directed towards any group is hate directed towards us all, and that standing against antisemitism is very much a part of all of our missions.

Cindy Rowe, JALSA Executive Director

BUILDING COMMUNITY AND CREATING JEWISH MEANING

With the immense upheaval and uncertainty created by authoritarian forces on the rise in the U.S. and the war in Israel and Gaza, it has been crucial to create spaces of community, connection, and trust, and access ancestral wisdom. The member organizations of the Collaborative create these spaces in ways that augment social justice work. Here are just two examples.

Creating Spaces for Building Community, Rejuvenation, and Fun - JFREJ



The powerful sense of community JFREJ members feel is an animating force for the organization. JFREJ's eight neighborhood groups are the places where members get to know and support each other and become part of each others' lives, while also taking action and learning.

Over 1,200 people are currently members of the local neighborhood groups, and over fifty volunteers have taken on facilitation roles. The neighborhood groups meet monthly, in a hybrid format: an in-person meeting in a member's apartment or at a park, with an option to join via video. This model has been so successful for JFREJ Community that other organizations are considering replicating it.



It's core to JFREJ's way of being that amidst the often serious work of social justice organizing, being part of JFREJ means time for rejuvenation and fun. In April, as one example, JFREJ's neighborhood groups hosted a city-wide Field Day in Central Park. Over 75 members came together for fun and joy. Participants played picklejuice pong and corn hole, learned new songs, and danced Yiddish folk dances.

Annual Freedom Seder - JCA



For twenty-three years, JCA'S Annual Freedom Seder in Minnesota has been bringing people together from diverse backgrounds, to retell the Passover story while connecting to modern-day liberation movements. Each year, roughly 200 people, both Jewish community members and partners, participate. The event follows a traditional seder format, and also weaves in new teachings and music.

The Passover story of an enslaved people achieving liberation through collective action is a powerful source of inspiration, with themes that connect us to our ancestors, that resonate across generations and identity groups, and that remain highly relevant to our times. JCA's yearly seders bring people together, call people into action, and create a ritual-infused space of belonging.

Top: JFREJ member speaks at the Field Day
Middle: Actors on stage at the DJJ Purim Shpiel
Bottom: Participants at JCA's Annual Freedom Seder

The Collaborative — Strengthening Organizations and the Field

Before the Collaborative was formed in 2020, each of its current member organizations existed independently and was doing powerful work. With each year, it is more evident that the decision to band together as part of the Collaborative for Jewish Organizing is making enormous contributions to the field. These contributions come in multiple forms, including essential flexible resources: over the last five years the Collaborative has raised over \$5 million in new funding, regranted over \$2.5 million, and invested \$600,000 more in direct capacity-building. Additionally, the Collaborative provides expert coaching and peer support for dozens of staff, strategic coordination and shared projects, and a powerful community of learning for members' executive directors.



Staff members from across the Collaborative gather at a Jewish Social Justice Roundtable convening

Our collective impact depends on having skilled and resilient staff and leaders. Thus the Collaborative has invested resources in strengthening staff across our organizations. The Collaborative's networking and professional development efforts span the functions of member organizations, with the most resources going towards supporting and developing community organizers. The Collaborative continues to contract with JOIN for Justice, a Jewish organizing training institution, for peer and one-to-one coaching for dozens of organizers. We also offer expanded coaching options to organizers of color.

Development professionals from all the member organizations meet semi-monthly, and have been helping each other fine-tune cases for support, strategize about planned giving programs, and create

cultures of fundraising in their organizations. The Collaborative also provides robust expert and peer learning support for communications staff. And this year the Collaborative launched a new community of practice for staff fighting antisemitism.

Crucially, the Collaborative offers vital connections for the executives of the nine organizations. The executives' work is always demanding and often lonely and isolating; in these difficult days, these jobs can be overwhelming. Each of the executive directors finds the Collaborative and the connections it fosters to be a lifeline. Beth Gendler, the Executive Director of JCA, describes the support she receives from the Collaborative:



I have benefited immeasurably from coaching. I've never worked as an organizer, and needed mentoring that I didn't even know I needed in order to supervise, support, and co-mentor our organizing staff. [My coach from JOIN, provided by the Collaborative] has been a hugely important resource, champion, support, and ass-kicker (in the best way possible). For me it was a case of not knowing what I didn't know. My coach has helped me nurture our staff through these times in a way that has helped us become more aligned, connected, and supportive than I could have imagined. I hadn't had good coaching experiences in the past and was reluctant to try, but it's not hyperbole to say that our coach's support has been life-changing.

Throughout 2024, the Collaborative offered professional development for executives and organizers, alleviated fundraising pressure, reduced executive isolation, supported frank conversations to increase cooperation and coordination, helped members develop capacity to maintain bonds with partners, and brought focus and resources to big-picture strategic issues.



CJJ members hold candles at a Havdallah gathering

About Us

Since its founding, the Collaborative has benefited from leadership with deep experience and grounding in the political, organizational, strategic, and relational dynamics of the field. Susan Lubeck, the Director of the Collaborative, is a seasoned social change leader. She spent a decade with Bend the Arc, first as Bay Area Regional Director and then as National Field Director. Rose Silverman helps to lead the Collaborative's work combating antisemitism. Rose has a rich set of social justice skills and experiences, volunteering as a leader with JCUA and having worked as a Senior Program Director for Avodah, supporting the leadership of young Jewish adults. Jacob Feinspan, Executive Director of Jews United for Justice (JUFJ) for the past 17 years, has built JUFJ into a major contributor to social justice campaigns in Washington, D.C., Baltimore, and Maryland. Jacob chairs and provides active co-leadership of the Collaborative. He also serves in other national leadership roles.

Organizations in the Collaborative are providing inspiration, community, and civic leadership skills for thousands of people who are participating as Jews and working across lines of race and faith. Playing key roles in multiracial coalitions, Collaborative member organizations are helping win policy victories that are bringing housing, safety, health care, enfranchisement, and more, to millions of people. Building relationships of trust and solidarity, these organizations continue to work at this very precarious moment for multiracial democracy, to create the relationships, commitments, systems, and skills we need to move forward together.

Through the three-strand braid of our work – organizing Jewish community, contributing as Jews to multiracial coalitions that win policy victories, and creating relationships of trust that bind together the social justice ecosystem – the organizations of the Collaborative are strengthening Jewish life and making outside contributions to justice, solidarity, and democracy.



The majority of investments in the Collaborative go directly to member organizations in the field, adding organizing capacity, leveraging public investments through policy change, fighting racism and antisemitism, and preserving and advancing democracy. The Collaborative has the capacity to put additional funds to work immediately on some of the most pressing issues facing our society, across 16 states and the District of Columbia. We are honored to strengthen and grow this sacred work.

Supporters

We are deeply grateful to our supporters, who make this work possible.

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