



## A Note From the Head of School

I am humbled and honored to be part of this incredible school for the 2022–2023 school year. As we have entered this new year, the word *opportunity* has come to the forefront of my mind.

We have the opportunity to support and encourage our students in ways that only JDS can. This school brings together the unique balance of love, life, and learning through general studies, Judaic studies, Hebrew, and social-emotional learning. These ideas are the foundation on which JDS is built and the legacy it provides for all who are connected to the community.



An additional opportunity afforded to us this year is the ability to gather together once again. Being together as family, friends, and villages exemplifies so much of the joy of JDS, and we will continue to create a strong sense of belonging, to connect with you, and to welcome you in our community today and always.

With gratitude,

Meghan Kimpton  
Head of School

## Alumni Spotlight

*Julia Kroopkin ('21) shares how she has become an active steward and leader in the Seattle area and beyond, using the skills, passion, and Jewish values she cultivated as a student at JDS.*

I am a sophomore at Gibson Ek High School, a project-based choice school in Issaquah. I am extremely passionate about activism, social justice, history, and education, and involved in several different organizations and groups.

For the past two years, I have been a part of the organization [Teens Encouraging Community Health \(TECH\)](#), a youth coalition of Influence the Choice. TECH is a nonprofit, anti-drug coalition focusing on mental health, and prevention and intervention of substance misuse for teens in our community.



I have also been involved with the Action Forum for Youth, the King County Youth Bill of Rights Task Force, [Interact Club of Issaquah](#), the Issaquah Food and Clothing Bank, and the [Immigrant Women's Community Center](#).

## Alumni Milestones



Mazel tov to Josh Niehaus ('97) and Karli Schiller, who welcomed Jaylan to the family this year. Jaylan is already showing his Jaguar spirit!



Congratulations to Uri Chotzen ('05) and Ariella Rams. They were married in August 2022 in Ojai, California.



Natanya Auerbach ('05) married Michael Gladstein in Seattle this July. Congratulations!



Congratulations to Saul Green ('07) and his wife Arianna, who welcomed baby Mason Mitchell Greene this year.



Mazel Tov to Ahbra Franco ('07) on her engagement to Alvin Ko, as well as her graduation from UW School of Law last spring.



Jacob Goren ('07) got engaged to Arielle Berne. Congrats!



Zoe Brown ('07) married Katie Campbell this past July outside of Roslyn, Washington. Mazel tov!

Congratulations to Danielle Levy ('09), who won a news and documentary Emmy for "[Bravery and Hope: 7 Days on the Frontline](#)."



David Schwartz ('09) got engaged to Austin Albrecht. Mazel tov!

We value our alumni and want to hear about what is happening in your lives. Share your travels, accomplishments, simchas, and news with us, and let us know if you would like to be featured in our Alumni Milestones!

[Share Your Story](#)

## Alumni Parents, We Need Your Help!

We are missing email addresses for many alumni students, particularly from the classes of 2002 to 2006, 2008 to 2009, and 2012 to 2014. If your JDS alum graduated during one of those years, please forward them this newsletter and ask them to fill out the [survey](#) so we can stay in touch.

## Alumni Events

We are hosting exciting alumni events throughout the year. We hope you can join us at our next event!



### Pop In and Play

In December, we hosted our first Pop In and Play, a fun opportunity for alumni and their children to connect, play, and build community. Join us at our next Pop In and Play on January 22 at JDS. We'll see you there!



### LA OneTable Shabbat Reunion

In December, JDS alumni living in LA gathered together to welcome Shabbat, celebrate an early Hanukkah, and reconnect with their JDS friends. Thank you to Oliver Galanti and OneTable for hosting such a wonderful event!

### Alumni Get-Together at Optimism



Join us at Optimism Brewing Company to share memories, catch up with old friends, and have a beer! The first drink is on JDS! Guests must be 21+.

When: Saturday, January 21, 6-8 p.m.

Where: Optimism Brewing Company | 1158 Broadway, Seattle

Any questions? Reach out to Haley at [hsloan@jds.org](mailto:hsloan@jds.org).

Interested in future alumni opportunities? Let us know at [alumni@jds.org](mailto:alumni@jds.org)! We'd love to connect with you.

## Join Us for Kehillah!

In the neighborhood on Friday mornings?

Pop over to JDS and join us for Kehillah! All alumni, alumni families, and prospective families are invited to join us to sing, enjoy some coffee and challah, and welcome Shabbat. See you soon!





## Current JDS Program Highlights

### Lego Robotics and Project-Based Learning

After piloting the program during the 2021–2022 school year, STEM teacher HaMoreh Chad’s vision of JDS’s new Lego robotics program has come to life. Since then, Chad has crafted a program that strikes a balance between academic engagement, inquiry, and serious fun. This year, students have responded with positive enthusiasm to the program’s changes.



Throughout the year, every student receives their very own Lego robot kit that lets them design several unique robots. Robots run the gamut from sumo bots that compete in an actual ring, to gyroscope-based marble mazes, to hanukkiyah that “light up” to the tune of Ma’oz Tzur. Along the way, students use problem-solving and critical thinking skills to code, build, troubleshoot, and share their learning.

This past fall, robotics became an interdisciplinary study through JDS’ project-based learning curriculum. Blue Villagers chose a traditional holiday from around the world, researched it, built a parade float in art, and then coded a robot to pull their holiday float. Other Villages will do similar interdisciplinary project-based units throughout the year.



### Jewish Court of All Time (JCAT)

Seventh graders eagerly await the day HaMorah Nance (middle school Jewmanities teacher) announces the start of Jewish Court of All Time (JCAT), a several months-long unit. Back in the day, JDS was a JCAT pilot school, and the program has only flourished since then.

JCAT is a seventh grade unit in which students are presented with a controversial scenario; this year's scenario addresses commemorations around the Skokie Affair, focusing on where to draw the line between free speech and hate speech. Students participate as a famous person or character of their choosing from history, with virtually no limits except that the person must have relevant life experience.

As JDS students take on the persona of their character and engage in civil discourse with other middle schoolers from around the country, they focus on a range of skills including critical thinking, evaluating primary sources, making historical connections, and building empathy. Enthusiasm for the program runs high, and it remains a highlight of seventh grade at JDS.

## Save the Date!



**SAVE *the* DATE!**  
SUNDAY, MARCH 5, 2023

**Venue**

Embassy Suites Downtown Pioneer Square  
255 S King St, Seattle WA 98104

**Doors Open at 4:30 PM**

**2023 Auction Co-Chairs**

Nancy Toker and Amy Benson

*Formal invitation to follow*

**Questions?**

Email [auction@jds.org](mailto:auction@jds.org) or Call 425-460-0242

Join us for an evening of food, fun, and festivities as we raise funds to support our school. This year we are excited to be able to offer all alumni and alumni families tickets a special discounted rate. Invitation to follow.