



The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation



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Weinberg Foundation Hosts National Convening on Jewish Poverty Event to include nationally known speakers, as well as a focus on data, best practices, and model programs addressing poverty within the Jewish community

BALTIMORE (March 19, 2019) – The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation, one of the 50 largest private charitable foundations in the United States, today will convene—for the first time in the Foundation’s 29-year history—a distinguished slate of national experts for a series of conversations focused on addressing Jewish poverty in the United States.

- **Hilton Union Square Hotel**
333 O’Farrell Street
San Francisco, California 94102
- **Program: 2:00 – 5:00 p.m. PST**

More than 200 people from 19 states and Washington, DC, as well as Israel and Canada, are expected to attend, including direct services professionals, funders, Jewish Federation leaders, researchers, government leaders, media representatives, and faith leaders.

All of the Foundation’s board members, representing its priority communities across the US, will be in attendance, including Robert T. Kelly, Jr., Board Chair; Ambassador Fay Hartog-Levin (Ret.), Trustee; Paula B. Pretlow, Trustee; and Gordon Berlin, Trustee, and President of MDRC—who will moderate a keynote panel discussion as part of the program.

The keynote panel will discuss the challenges of poverty in general throughout the US, as well as the unique aspects of Jewish poverty. The panel (listed below) will also assess the current research on low-income Jewish households and identify potential next steps related to national Jewish poverty.

- **Gordon Berlin**, Trustee, Weinberg Foundation; President, MDRC; panel facilitator
- **Wes Moore**, CEO, Robin Hood Foundation
- **Alan Cooperman**, Director, Religion Research, Pew Research Center
- **Sarah Abramson**, Senior Vice President, Strategy and Impact, Combined Jewish Philanthropies

While the issue of Jewish poverty in the United States is complex, the purpose of this Convening is simple: to shine a light on those who are struggling to achieve greater economic mobility and a better quality of life.

“Over the past year, the Weinberg Foundation has sought to raise the standards by which we make grants, invest in our communities, and achieve lasting impact,” said Rachel Garbow Monroe, Weinberg Foundation President and CEO. “We asked ourselves ‘How can we do better?’ Part of the answer has been to develop smarter grantmaking strategies, to leverage partnerships and collaborations, and to

enhance our internal capacity to measure the Foundation’s impact,” Monroe added. “Another answer has been to commit to taking on some of the most difficult and ignored issues, problems, and communities related to poverty in America.”

“Poverty is multifaceted, it is prejudiced, and it is complex; but if we move in partnership, we can find impactful solutions,” said Robin Hood CEO Wes Moore. “I am honored to join leaders and partners from across the country to speak about Robin Hood’s work and the current challenges around poverty in the United States, including the important issue of Jewish poverty.”

Earlier in 2018, the Weinberg Foundation began to think more proactively about how to better address the issue of Jewish poverty. After finding limited, meaningful recent data, the Foundation reached out to more than 70 leaders of Jewish Federations, nonprofits, and foundations, as well as other national leaders. The Foundation then compiled these findings in a modest report and began planning for a convening of community leaders throughout the country.

“Because the US Census does not ask individual Americans about their religion, there is practically no federal data on income or poverty levels among Jews,” said Alan Cooperman, Director, Religion Research, Pew Research Center. “Almost all the information we have comes from surveys, and income is one of the more sensitive topics one can ask about in a survey,” Cooperman added. “The result is a crying need for better information.”

“It is critical that we come to terms with the significant numbers of individuals in our own Jewish community who are struggling economically and take concrete steps toward data-informed solutions,” said Sarah Abramson, Senior Vice President, Strategy and Impact, Combined Jewish Philanthropies. “In Boston, CJP has implemented a comprehensive, community-wide Anti-Poverty Initiative to address Jewish poverty—but there is more work to be done, including a need for robust national data and research.” Abramson added, “This Convening is a critical step in establishing a much-needed national dialogue and collaboration around this issue.”

The Foundation intends this Convening to be only the beginning of an ongoing, action-oriented national dialogue that will result in collaboration among individuals, organizations, and communities. Moreover, the Foundation hopes these partnerships will build knowledge, actionable data, and best practices in service delivery—all focused on combating poverty within Jewish communities nationally.

In addition to the keynote panel, today’s event will also include six interactive breakout sessions and three “bright spots” talks, which highlight successful programs or ideas from Jewish communities across the country.

Interactive Breakout Sessions

Sessions will focus on specific aspects of Jewish poverty. Six of the leading experts in their fields have each authored a [concept paper](#), which has been distributed to each registered participant prior to the Convening for advance reading. Those in attendance will have the opportunity to hear these experts speak further on their papers and to engage in an active discussion during the breakout sessions.

- **Advancing Research on Jewish Poverty**
A more unified approach to measuring economic deprivation and vulnerability.
Led by Alan Cooperman (Pew Research Center) and Laurence Kotler-Berkowitz (Jewish Federations of North America)
- **Innovative Approaches to Combating Hunger**
How two Jewish Federations are leveraging technology and data to decrease hunger and increase dignity in their communities.
Led by Alexandra Roth-Kahn and Abbe Pick (UJA-Federation of New York) and Raquel Romirowsky (Jewish Federation of Greater Philadelphia)

- **Jewish Poverty in the Media**
Why are poor Jews rarely found in media portrayals of the American Jewish community, and how can the media make Jewish poverty a more urgent concern?
Led by Jane Eisner (The Forward)
- **No Wrong Door**
One Jewish Federation's approach to addressing poverty in our community.
Led by Sarah Abramson and Amanda Badolato (Combined Jewish Philanthropies)
- **The Silent Predictor**
Exploring the intersection of gender and Jewish poverty.
Led by Naomi Tucker (Shalom Bayit)
- **When More Than Half a Billion Dollars is Not Enough**
The efforts and challenges faced by the Claims Conference and its partner agencies, such as in Chicago, in addressing the unmet need of vulnerable Holocaust survivors.
Led by Miriam Weiner (Claims Conference) and Yonit Hoffman (CJE SeniorLife)

Bright Spots Talks

This will be a fast-paced series of presentations by nonprofit and community leaders sharing examples of evidence-based, replicable programs.

- **A Vision for Change:**
One synagogue's story of helping to catalyze a city to end family homelessness.
Led by Rabbi Ryan Bauer (Congregation Emanu-El)
- **Community in Action:**
Leaving egos at the door, Detroit Jewish leaders' use of design thinking to combat poverty.
Led by Perry Ohren (Jewish Family Service of Metro Detroit)
- **Shelter as a Holistic Refuge:**
The missing link in a coordinated community response.
Led by Joy Solomon (The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Center for Elder Justice at the Hebrew Home at Riverdale)

For those who are unable to attend, the Foundation will provide links to recordings of select content, including the opening panel discussion as well as the presentations that will conclude the Convening. These video links will be made available in the days following the event.

Please follow all Jewish Poverty Convening developments at <http://hjweinbergfoundation.org/jewishpovertyconvening> and on Facebook and Twitter at #JewishPovertyConvening, #JewishPovertyResponse, #NotWhatYouThink, and #OurResponsibility.

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About The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation

The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation, one of the 50 largest private charitable foundations in the United States, is dedicated to meeting the basic needs of vulnerable people and families experiencing poverty. In 2019, the Foundation will provide approximately \$125 million in grants to nonprofits that provide direct services in the areas of Housing, Health, Jobs, Education, and Community Services. The Foundation's priority communities include Baltimore, Chicago, Hawaii, Israel, New York City, Northeastern Pennsylvania, San Francisco, and Rural Communities (primarily surrounding other priority communities). The Foundation's trustees include Robert T. Kelly, Jr., Board Chair; Ambassador Fay Hartog-Levin (Ret.); Paula B. Pretlow; and Gordon Berlin. Rachel Garbow Monroe continues to serve as President and CEO. For more information, please visit www.hjweinbergfoundation.org.