

About Our Presenters



Elana Arian is one of the leading voices in contemporary Jewish music. A composer, multi-instrumentalist, prayer leader, and recording artist, Elana inspires communities across the country with her soulful songwriting and spirit. Elana's work has been included in many Transcontinental Music publications, including both the popular *Ruach* and *Shabbat Anthology* series, and her compositions are sung in synagogues, summer camps, and spiritual communities from London to Cape Town, from Australia to New Orleans, and everywhere in between. Elana has released three

albums of original music and is thrilled to be working on her fourth, entitled *The Other Side of Fear*. Elana has served on the faculty of both Hava Nashira in Oconomowoc, WI and Shirei Chagiga in London. In addition to touring nationally as an Artist in Residence in communities across the country, Elana is proud to teach at and the Hebrew Union College - Jewish Institute of Religion in New York, working as an Adjunct Instructor and Teaching Artist in the Debbie Friedman School of Sacred Music. She has performed at Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, Tanglewood, and perhaps most memorably, five separate appearances at the (Obama) White House.

Raised on equal parts Mozart, Mingus, and Mitchell, Elana studied conducting and violin, jazz guitar, and songwriting as an undergraduate at Yale. She has appeared on NPR's *Soundcheck*, as well as on PBS' *Finding Your Roots*. A sought-after studio musician, Elana also maintains a busy recording schedule (*see below*), working with such varied artists as Peter Yarrow, the Dirty Projectors, and Catie Curtis. She held the guitar chair in the smash revival of *Sweet Charity* starring Tony award-winner, Sutton Foster, as well as in Kristin Chenoweth's Broadway concert tour, *For the Girls*.

Paulette Black has been involved in WRJ for over 25 years serving as sisterhood president at Beth El Temple Center, Belmont, MA, as an Area Director and Vice President on the WRJ Northeast Executive Board and as a WRJ Board Member ending in 2020. Paulette was the Chair of WRJ Israel Education and Advocacy Group. Paulette has been a lifelong educator and for the past 16 years has worked in digital education and is a specialist at Riverside Insights supporting educators across the country. Paulette has been studying and practicing Mussar over the past 6 years and is passionate about adult learning programming.





Trina Novak is the Immediate Past President of Women of Reform Judaism Northeast District and a WRJ Board member. She currently serves as the co-chair of WRJ's Education to Action Committee and WRJ says STOP: an Initiative against Sexual Harassment and Assault. She is a past sisterhood president and member of the Sisterhood of Temple Beth Shalom of Needham, MA. Inspired by a WRJ workshop, Trina participated in a Women's Torah Study group for 20 years and is now engaged in Mussar study and practice through Beth El Temple Center in Belmont, MA.

Rima Perlstein Riedel is a woman of many talents. She is a writer, teacher, performance artist, workshop presenter, belly dance instructor, and is the author of cozy mysteries including the engaging *Shimmy, Shimmy, Homicide*.



Renee Lee Rosenberg: MA, Vocational Counseling, Licensed Mental Health Counselor, Certified Career Counselor, Certified Emotional Intelligence Coach, International Speaker, Trainer, Author, Anti-Ageism Advocate, known as the "Positivity Pro". Renee has 25+ years' experience coaching business owners, lawyers, educators, financial professionals and others in career and life decisions. She speaks nationally and internationally, virtually and onsite. She offers presentations, training and one on one coaching to corporations, non-profits, government agencies, unions, small business in the areas of: branding, networking, pre-retirement, intergenerational workplace communication, defeating ageist stereotyping, practical stress reduction interventions and increasing well-being and happiness on the job and in life.

Jane Sanders was a social worker for 17 years with the Town of Bethlehem Senior Services Department, New York. Jane provided Information and Referrals regarding programs and services for older adults. Her program services included visiting homebound elderly, plan programs for senior citizens and other community members and providing health insurance counseling - certified HIICAP counselor for NYS. Jane supervised co-workers and some volunteers and social work interns and coordinated the Bethlehem Food Pantry. Jane is also a former member of the WRJ-NE Board.



Munya Avigail Upin is a nationally recognized artist with over forty-five years of experience in the field of metalsmithing. Munya's oeuvre includes wearable art, small sculptures, and contemporary Jewish ceremonial objects. She has created one-of-a-kind pieces for synagogues and private collectors. She is a sought-after educator leading workshops at colleges, craft centers, and museum schools.

A native of Faribault, Minnesota, Munya Avigail Upin began working with metal in high school. After earning a BFA from Drake University, an MA from San Diego State (thank you, Arline Fisch), Munya became Artist in Residence at the Oregon School of Arts and Crafts and later earned an MFA from California State University- Fullerton.