

JCC East Bay announces new CEO, Amy Tobin
~ Appointment heralds plans to engage diverse Jewish community~

For Immediate Release

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Oakland, June 27th, 2014. Amy Tobin is the new CEO of the Jewish Community Center of the East Bay (JCC East Bay). Her appointment was announced by Board President John Ifcher today. Acknowledging her creative mind and entrepreneurial expertise, he said: “We are thrilled that someone with Amy’s vision and leadership skills will direct the JCC East Bay. Her passion for enriching and exploring Jewish identity through inclusive social and artistic programs will be a powerful asset for the diverse Jewish community of the East Bay. The JCC is strong and flourishing, and the entire Board is excited and ready to partner with Amy to deepen our impact in the East Bay.”

Tobin has led and supported nonprofit community, arts and social change organizations for 20 years. “This role speaks to my core values: I believe in the power and importance of physical gathering spaces and I am deeply committed to creating and nurturing a sense of community,” she said.

Elaborating on her vision, Tobin said, “We get to constantly engage with Jewish tradition to keep it relevant, inclusive, and evolving. I’m so excited to work with this creative, intergenerational community – to re-imagine the JCC’s role in 21st century Jewish life. Building on the solid foundation built by the board and outgoing executive director Sally Kauffman Flinchbaugh, we can create beautiful – and sustainable – spaces where people feel at home. We are poised to support and collaborate with local and national organizations and synagogues, with artists, thought-leaders and scholars, and the greater East Bay community.”

A nationally-recognized Jewish leader, Tobin is the recipient of several honors, including the Gerbode Foundation fellowship in 2012 and the Joshua Venture fellowship for Jewish social entrepreneurs in 2001. She was selected as one of the “Forward 50” in 2002 by the Forward newspaper, the only national Jewish weekly. Tobin was a keynote speaker in 2002 at the General Assembly of the Jewish Federations of North America, the annual gathering of Jewish Federations.

That’s why national Jewish leaders as well as local opinion-shapers have hailed this appointment. Amichai Lau-Lavie, founder and spiritual leader of Lab/Shul NYC called Tobin “a visionary artist, and a radical thinker with that rare combination of Jewish passion, wild creativity and the ability to get things done.”

Reflecting on what she brings to this new role, Tobin said, “fifteen years ago, I worked at the JCC of San Francisco. I was in my twenties and questioning everything about Jewish communal life. For many of us, it felt like the beginning of a national movement to revitalize and examine Jewish life through the arts and social change. We aspired to create and belong to a Jewish community that reflects our multi-dimensional identities. We supported each other and created things like Storahtelling, JDub Records, Reboot, Keshet, Hazon, G-dcast, Heeb Magazine, Be’chol Lashon, and many more.”

Tobin joins the JCC East Bay after six years leading the David Brower Center as the founding executive director. In that position, she led the construction and establishment of an award-winning \$28 million LEED Platinum-rated facility that is a destination for environmental and social action. She also provided strategic leadership, successfully completing an \$11 million capital campaign. Her return to the Jewish community

reflects her interest in bringing values like sustainability to daily Jewish life. Her appointment demonstrates that the East Bay Jewish community is investing in young leadership (Tobin turns 40 a month after taking on her new role).

“Whatever Amy Tobin touches lights up and catches fire. Her past work speaks for itself, from her viral Purim parties to her stewardship of young adult programs at the JCCSF to our work together with DAWN [the annual Bay Area arts-based Shavuot event] ... she knows how to bring people together. The JCC East Bay could not have picked a better person for the CEO position,” commented David Katznelson, director of strategy for the San Francisco Jewish Community Federation and board president of Reboot, which engages and inspires young, Jewishly-unconnected cultural creatives and innovators.

Tobin also brings her experience as the founding artistic director of The Hub at the Jewish Community Center of San Francisco (JCCSF), where she created community among Jewish young adults through arts events. She worked with the JCCSF during a time of tremendous transition, including a capital campaign and facility relocation.

“Amy has just the right combination of entrepreneurial spirit, knowledge of Jewish culture and a deep appreciation for the importance of a pluralistic approach and being welcoming to everyone,” reflected Nate Levine, BuildingBlox consulting principal/founder and former executive director of the JCCSF.

She is an artist herself, which gives her a special edge in working with other artists and producing public programs. As a vocalist, songwriter, and performer, Amy has released two albums and toured nationally with "The Esther Show," a cabaret rock opera with a modern interpretation of the Book of Esther.

Amy Tobin lives in Oakland with her husband, Scott Jacobson and 21-month old daughter Maayan. She has lived in the Bay Area since 1996. Her father is Dr. Gary Tobin (z"l), one of the leading modern thinkers in Jewish life and founder and president of San Francisco's Institute for Jewish & Community Research (IJCR).

About the JCC East Bay

The JCC East Bay promotes intellectual, experiential and spiritual exploration of Jewish culture and tradition; builds joyful, progressive and inclusive community; and inspires the active pursuit of repairing the world. With two branches and over 60 staff members, the JCC East Bay serves Oakland, Berkeley, and surrounding communities through programs that promote Jewish life, culture, health, and community.

Over 10,000 people are served by the JCC East Bay each year. Signature programs include its award-winning Preschool, Afterschool and Camp Programs, the internationally celebrated Jewish Music Festival and other cultural and intellectual offerings, as well as health and wellness programs, lifelong learning, a robust JCC Maccabi program for teens, and a wide array of services for older adults.

According to a 2011 community study commissioned by the Jewish Federation of the East Bay, there are 175,000 Jews or household members in the Jewish population of the East Bay (including Alameda, Contra Costa, Solano, and Napa Counties). The four county area of the East Bay may be among the largest Jewish communities in the country.

JCC East Bay CEO Amy Tobin is available for interviews.

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