

Ammud: The JOC Torah Academy

2023 Look Back



AMMUD
JEWS OF COLOR
TORAH ACADEMY

A Message from Ammud Leadership

Every time we step into an Ammud classroom, the sentiments that participants consistently share captivate us. So often, we see or hear about tears of joy matched with the excitement of a homecoming, a safer space for Jews of Color at Ammud. We listen to visions of reaching the highest heights of Jewish education and being able to dream about it because Ammud exists. We hear about students who have been studying Hebrew in isolation for over 20 years because of the fear of encountering racism. Then we hear about them practicing their skills and being able to study comfortably in Jewish community at Ammud.

Ammud exists for the love of Torah and the belief that it should be accessible to every Jewish person.

We are delighted to present a snapshot of the past year at Ammud: The Jews of Color Torah Academy and what we've been able to accomplish with your generous support and encouragement. As a new organization that is finding our way to growth and larger impact, we've been experimenting with different types of programs to learn what deeply resonates and can have lasting impact.

At Ammud's core is lively Torah learning and wisdom creation where JOCs can comfortably show up. And as a new organization, we are in this process of discovering our direction to grow and thrive. Which is why we're delighted to officially start a strategic plan with the support of social impact consulting firm Third Plateau. This will be a collaborative process with our supporters and community over the next few months. Ammud's strategic plan will be ready by early spring, which will launch a new chapter of new signature programs at Ammud, expanding our impact, and deepening our community.

We're so excited to have you along for this journey as we grow Ammud: The Jews of Color Torah Academy. Thank you for your support.



Rabbi Heather Miller, she/her
Board Chair



Alexandra Corwin, she/her
Executive Director



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Year in Review

Skill Building of Torah Teaching

We created a vibrant and thorough pedagogical process rooted in encouragement for JOCs to become Torah teachers. We identified people who may not have already seen themselves as teachers and or Torah teachers and invested in them. We gave them the support, guidance, and one on one coaching to turn their idea into a unique piece of Jewish wisdom to be taught at Amnud.

Hebrew Learning

We created 2 levels of classes where JOCs could learn to read Hebrew in community. One class focused on starting to read the Aleph Bet and one on Hebrew prayer. We developed our online portal so past students can access their learning materials as they grow in their learning.

In-Person Torah Learning Community Pop-Ups

We held several pop-up Torah and community building spaces in New York City, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Washington D.C. Members were able to connect in-person and build local friendships through Torah learning.



Torah of Gathering Fellowship with Pardes North America

This inaugural fellowship invested in the Jewish education and communal leadership of Jews of Color. Through intensive sessions, fellows gained tools in Torah learning, pedagogy, and community building.

Processing and Healing Spaces Rooted in Torah

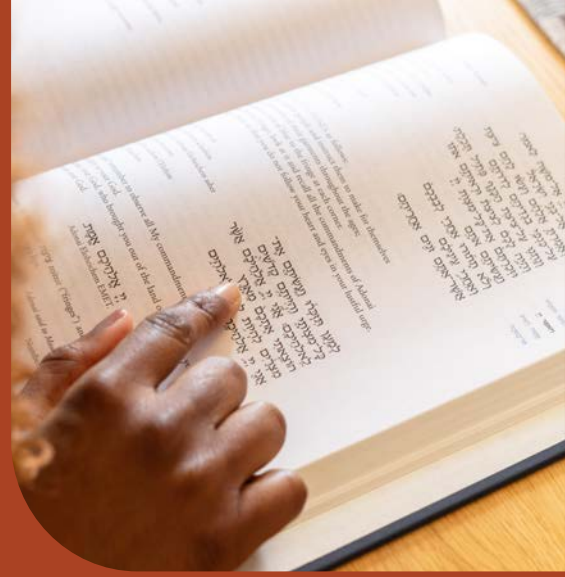
We held processing spaces throughout the year for Jews of Color after racialized shootings. Knowing that white supremacy and Anti-Black racism are deep and pervasive, we know these events deeply impact our members. We provided a distinctly Jewish healing respite for JOCs to center during these difficult times. After the brutality of October 7th, Amnud held prayer and Kaddish spaces for our members to mourn and pray in community.

Learning and Connecting at Amnud


From weekly Parasha study to our seminar classes, JOCs engaged with Amnud through learning opportunities throughout the year. Amnud classes were unique contributions to Jewish wisdom. Community, deep learning, and love of Torah were present in each of our classes. Our Amnud team also connected with new Amnud JOC members throughout the year to welcome them and guide them through our offerings.



Snapshot of Learning




**Tisha B'Av
Unveiled: Pulling
Back the Curtain
on Adult Learning**



taught by
Gil Brandt

Sunday, June 25th
11:00am-12:30pm ET | 10:00am-11:30am CT | 8:00am-9:30am PT



**Exploring Brachot:
On Authentic
Jewish Living**



taught by
Tony Westbrook

Thursday, December 21st
12-1:30 pm ET | 11 am-12:30 pm CT | 9-10:30 am PT



**Kavanah and Shana Tova:
Setting New Year's
Resolutions**




taught by
Sarah Pearl Fried

Wednesday, September 13th
6-7:30 pm PT in San Francisco, CA




**Hospitality as an
Antidote to
Environmental
Racism and
Climate Chaos**



taught by
Dr. Cara Judea
Alhadeff

Wednesday, September 6th
11:30 am-1:00pm ET | 10:30 am-12:00pm CT | 8:30 am-10:00am PT



**Flowing Spring:
An Exploration of
Pirkei Avot**



taught by
Rabbi Heather Miller

Wednesday, July 5th
6:30pm-7:45pm ET | 5:30pm-6:45pm CT | 3:30pm-4:45pm PT



**Connecting the Sections
Within Us: Using Jewish
Wisdom to Explore
Authenticity in an
Intersectional Reality**



taught by
Tamar Zaken

Tuesday, November 21st
3-4:30 pm ET | 2-3:30 pm CT | 12-1:30 pm PT



**Hillel, Shammai and The
Hannukah Lights:
Understanding the
Layers of Wellness**




taught by
Rabbi Becky Jaye

Tuesday, December 12th
4-5:30 pm ET | 3-4:30 pm CT | 1-2:30 pm PT




**Responding from
Center: Embodied
Torah for Life
Discernment**



taught by
Yoshi Silverstein

Tuesday, July 18th
7:00pm-8:30pm ET | 6:00pm-7:30pm CT | 4:00pm-5:30pm PT



102 learning programs in
2023 and counting

Serving 711 JOC members
in 2023 and counting

**Tkhines:
Prayers in our
Own Words**




taught by
Cameron Bernstein

Wednesday, January 25th
4:00pm-5:15pm ET | 3:00pm-4:15pm CT | 1:00pm-2:15pm PT




**Spiritual
Ending of
Yom Kippur**



taught by
Meital Gerson

Sunday, August 27th
6:00pm-7:30pm ET in Prospect Park, Brooklyn, NY



Testimonials of Ammud's Impact in 2023

"Being around other JOCs reinforces my sense of belonging to a Jewish community. When I enter the space, I don't have to answer any questions about myself and I don't have to protect myself against ignorant and naive comments or questions.

Being in a space with other JOCs helps me balance my mental health and strengthens my Jewish values."

— Kelsi, she/her

"The intensive made me want to have more opportunities for text study and gathering in my day to day life."

— Ziggy, they/them

"It feels like a living Jewish space...not a blog, or an inbox, an actual living, breathing, thinking, doing, communing, safe Jewish space for Jew of all hues."

— Kimberly, she/her

"Ammud has been instrumental in my growth as a JOC leader. Ammud not only gave me an opportunity to lead and share my learning with the JOC community, but it also trained me and gave me the guidance I needed to grow as an educator. The process of workshoping my ideas with Ammud set me up for success. Furthermore, Ammud has been attentive during this hard time and has made it clear that I am able to reach out for guidance should I need. I appreciate the work Ammud does, and I recommend it wholeheartedly as a supportive and crucial organization for the JOC community."

— Maetal, she/her

"This fellowship gave me the perfect environment to connect with other JOC's and develop the skills I need in order to create those spaces of belonging."

— Maia, she/her

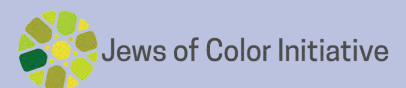
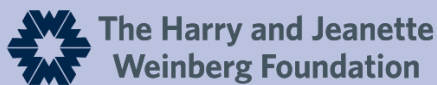
"I love the energy that educators bring to Ammud. It's a safe place to learn, and I don't feel silly asking questions or admitting that I don't know something. I'm excited to apply the things I've learned with Ammud to my study and prayer.

— Eileen, she/her/they/them

"I am awed that I was given the opportunity to be immersed in such an incredibly rich learning opportunity. I have gained skills, confidence and connections to not only deepen my own text study but as well to convene and lead gatherings with the intention of sparking meaningful connections."

— Lara, they/them

Thanks and Gratitude for the Support of our Partners





Ammud Board

Rabbi Heather Miller, she/her
 Tema Smith, she/her
 Jordan Berg Powers, he/him

Ammud Staff

Alexandra Corwin, she/her,
 Sarah Pearl Fried, she/her,
 Senior Director of
 Operations and Impact



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Shabbat

משכון תפלה