



The Association of Reform Jewish Educators
Since 1955

633 Third Avenue | New York, NY 10017-6778

EDUCATOR SEARCH APPLICATION

RETURN ORIGINAL TO:
(Preferably by E-mail)
Rabbi Stan Schickler, RJE
Association of Reform Jewish Educators
633 Third Avenue
New York, NY 10017-6778
212-452-6510 sschickler@reformeducators.org

CONGREGATION/INSTITUTION	Temple Emanu-El	DATE OF APPLICATION	12/2018
STREET ADDRESS	8500 Hillcrest Road		
CITY, STATE/PROVINCE, ZIP CODE/POSTAL ZONE	Dallas, TX 75225		
TELEPHONE NUMBER	214-706-0021	FAX	214-706-0025
E-MAIL	yle@tedallas.org	WEBSITE	www.tedallas.org
URJ DISTRICT	Southwest	DATE POSITION IS AVAILABLE	Immediately
POSITION TITLE	Kindergarten – 6 th Engagement Coordinator	FULL or PART-TIME	Full-time

- Director of Lifelong Jewish Learning (DoLJL) or Director of Lifelong Learning (DoLL)**—Responsible for oversight of virtually all education in the congregation; supervises all education and educational administration personnel
When a congregation seeks to hire a DoLJL or DoLL, it should consider how the position will be appropriately supported with additional educational *and* administrative staff, all of whom would be supervised by the DoLJL or DoLL
- Director of Congregational Learning (DoCE)**—Serves in an oversight capacity of the congregational school and has other congregational education responsibilities (which may or may not include supervision in the area[s] of youth programming, adult education, early childhood, and / or other areas of education)

When a congregation seeks to hire a DoCE, it should consider how the position will be appropriately supported with additional educational *and* administrative staff, such as an Assistant Director of Congregational Education, all of whom would be supervised by the DoCE.
- Religious School Director (RSD)**—Primary responsibility is direction of the religious school
 - Assistant Religious School Director**—May be hired to provide additional educational support to the Religious School Director
- School Administrator**—Primarily responsible for administration of the school and perhaps some educational responsibilities

PLEASE INCLUDE A JOB DESCRIPTION WITH THIS APPLICATION

See Attachment I below.

DEMOGRAPHICS

	TOTAL NUMBER OF FAMILY UNITS	# OF FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN IN THE RELIGIOUS SCHOOL	TOTAL # OF STUDENTS IN THE RELIGIOUS SCHOOL	AVERAGE # OF ANNUAL B'NAI MITZVAH
THIS YEAR	2621	368	560	68
FIVE YEARS AGO	2506	413	655	68
FUTURE DEMOGRAPHIC PROJECTIONS ARE no significant change predicted				

NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENROLLED BY GRADE

PreK	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
n/a	60	66	61	49	61	68	62	47	35	30	21	n/a	n/a
OTHER (specify): We currently have 20 11 th and 12 th grade madrichim (teen teaching assistants)													

DAY CARE	n/a	PARENTS' DAY OUT	n/a	EARLY CHILDHOOD	345
OTHER (specify):					

HEBREW BEGINS IN GRADE	3	AND CONTINUES THROUGH GRADE	6	CONFIRMATION BEGINS IN GRADE	9-10
ADULT PROGRAMMING	Yes	JEWISH PARENTING PROGRAMMING		Yes	
CAMPS (URJ REGIONAL AND CONGREGATIONAL) URJ Greene Family Camp					

II. DAYS AND TIMES OF CLASSES

RELIGIOUS SCHOOL	HEBREW SCHOOL	CONFIRMATION	POST-CONFIRMATION
Sundays, 9:30-noon	Sundays, 8-9 am Small groups meet throughout the week	Sundays, 9:30-noon	Varies
WEEKDAY EARLY CHILDHOOD	DAY CARE	PARENTING/FAMILY PROGRAMMING	PARENTS' DAY OUT
Full-time			
CAMP (CONGREGATION ONLY) N/A			
OTHER (specify)			

III. PROFESSIONAL STAFF

Even if they will not be associated with the congregation next year, please list the names of all current professional staff members. Indicate if their position is full-time or part-time and their years of service with the congregation. Additional lines are provided for other staff positions, if applicable.

	NAME	FULL or PART-TIME	YEARS SERVED
SENIOR RABBI	David Stern	Full-Time	28.5
SENIOR ASSOCIATE RABBI	Debra Robbins	Full-Time	26.5
ASSOCIATE RABBI	Kimberly Herzog-Cohen	Full-Time	7.5
ASSISTANT RABBI	Daniel Utley	Full-Time	2.5
SENIOR CANTOR	Vicky Glikin	Full-Time	2.5
CANTOR	Leslie Niren	Full-Time	4.5
EDUCATOR	Rabbi Amy Ross	Full-Time	8.5
ASSISTANT EDUCATOR	Hannah Rubin-Schlansky	Full-Time	2.5
ADMINISTRATOR (Executive Dir)	Rick Rosenberg	Full-Time	22.5
PROGRAM DIRECTOR (Dir of Congregational Engagement)	Karen Hoffman	Full-Time	11.5
YOUTH WORKER			
EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATOR	Shelly Sender	Full-Time	11.5

Does the professional staff undergo a regular performance review process ? How often ? Please include a description of this process, especially as it applies to the educator.

Professional staff undergoes a yearly performance evaluation that includes self-evaluation in combination with supervisory evaluation. Ongoing performance check-ins will take place during regularly scheduled meetings throughout each year.

SECRETARIES/ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANTS		FULL or PART-TIME	YEARS SERVED
TO EDUCATOR(S)	1	Full-time	1
TO RABBI(S)			
TO CANTOR(S)			
TO ADMINSTRATOR			

NUMBER OF TEACHERS		SPECIALISTS	
COORDINATORS / DEPARTMENT HEADS (lead teachers per grade)	10	ART	1
PRIMARY (K-6)	28	COMPUTER	
INTERMEDIATE		DANCE	
UPPER		DRAMA	
BAR / BAT MITZVAH	3 tutors	HEBREW	
HIGH SCHOOL / POST B'NAI MITZVAH (7-12)	7	LEARNING CENTER	
ARE THERE ANY FULL-TIME TEACHERS ?	No	LIBRARIAN	1
CUSTODIAL STAFF (specify full or part-time)	13 mostly full-time		

IV. FACILITIES

SANCTUARY	1	NUMBER OF CLASSROOMS	45
CHAPEL	3	ART ROOM	1
LIBRARY	1	MUSIC ROOM	
SOCIAL HALL / AUDITORIUM	3	YOUTH LOUNGE	1
SANCTUARY / SOCIAL HALL COMBINATION		TEACHER RESOURCE CENTER	2
		EDUCATOR'S OFFICE	2
		COMPUTER ROOM	
		STUDENT LEARNING CENTER	
OTHER (SPECIFY)			
IS THE EARLY CHILDHOOD FACILITY SHARED WITH RELIGIOUS SCHOOL ? Yes			

AGE of BUILDINGS:	SANCTUARY	Varies	SCHOOL	Varies	OFFICE AREA	Varies
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If there is a satellite facility, please describe it. Include size, distance from main facility, age, days/hours spent on that site, etc.
N/A

V. CONGREGATIONAL IDENTITY

The Congregation / Institution was founded in	1872	and became a member of the URJ (UAHC) in	1904
The Shabbat prayer book used is	Mishkan T'filah		
The High Holy Day <i>machzor</i> used is	Mishkan HaNefesh		
Has the Religious School received ARJE Accreditation ?	No	If yes, in what year ?	

What are the three primary goals of your congregation/institution?

See the Core Values Statement (Attachment II) and the Congregational Focus Statement (Attachment III) following this application. Please note that the focus statement will be updated in the coming months. An updated copy will be provided as part of the interview process to interested applicants.

What are the congregation’s/institution’s strengths?

- *Authentic sense of warmth and welcome
- *Dynamic energy
- *Embrace of change and challenge
- *Commitment to meaningful and vibrant communal prayer
- *High caliber of Jewish learning
- *Strong level of engagement of clergy, staff and laity
- *Deep roots balanced with progressive vision
- *Historic and daily commitment to social justice

What are the strengths of your educational program?

- *Excitement around and readiness for continued change in education and engagement programming
- *Dedicated staff and teachers, many of whom are involved Temple members
- *Commitment to professional development through teacher training
- *Unique program (“Lomdim”) for students with special needs and learning differences, including “shadow” mentors and other levels of support
- *Dynamic Hebrew program allowing students to learn in small groups in their homes and neighborhoods
- *Highly regarded Early Childhood Education Center, accredited by NAEYC

What three qualities in your Educator are most important to the congregation/institution?

- *Energetic and relatable, able to both lead and “hang out” with youth
- *Openness to new ideas and creativity in managing challenges
- *Thrives working collaboratively with a team

The three most important priorities of the congregation/institution’s Educator should be:

- *Growth of Youth Emanu-El (K-6 youth engagement) community and programming
- *Maintain and improve emphasis on social justice in K-6 program
- *Create engaging Shabbat and holiday celebrations for families and build culture around family engagement

Please see the full job description, Attachment 1 below.

The single most important thing an Educator needs to know about the congregation/institution is:

We are strongly committed to the role of Jewish engagement and learning in deepening our commitment to Jewish values, deeds and identity. Whether in our congregation’s historical and ongoing commitment to social justice, or our emphasis on worship and community, Jewish engagement with this community is the portal that can provide challenge and enrichment to our congregants at every age.

The three most important issues facing the congregation/institution in the next five years will be:

- *Building relationships, in each demographic and throughout the congregation as a whole.
- *Transforming Jewish education and engagement for students and families in the 21st century.
- *Deepening the sense of Jewish meaning and experience for youth, young adults and parents of school-age children in particular, and for congregants of all ages.

VI. INCUMBENT EDUCATOR

Has the current educator been informed that the congregation / institution is in placement ?	N/A
On what date will the current educator relinquish his/her position ?	

VII. COMMUNITY ATTRACTIONS

General population of location	1.2 million	Total Jewish population	50,000
JEWISH INSTITUTIONS IN AREA	Approximately 19 other congregations in area, 7 Reform		

JCC	Yes
Federation	Yes
Jewish Family Service	Yes
Central Jewish Education Agency	Yes
Jewish Day School (which grades) ?	Yes – K-8 Levine Academy, 9-12 Yavneh, K-12 (2 Orthodox)
Other	
Majority of members' children attend public school, private school, or Jewish day school ?	The majority attend public or private school with a small minority attending Jewish day schools.
Colleges, universities and music conservatories in the area include	See attachment IV
What cultural opportunities are available (e.g., symphony, opera, museum, theatre, sports, etc.) ?	See attachment IV

VIII. REMUNERATION

INDICATE EITHER A SPECIFIC FIGURE OR A SPECIFIC RANGE. The "Proposed Salary" section should read, for example, "\$60,000-\$70,000" or "the minimum salary base is \$60,000" or "the maximum salary is \$80,000." PLEASE **DO NOT** WRITE "negotiable", or "open," or "not yet determined" with no numbers included. **Without this information, your position will not be included in the ARJE's placement listings. It is also highly recommended that you NOT list remuneration as a "package."**

PROPOSED SALARY or SALARY RANGE	\$38,000-\$45,000
Percentage of pension (RPB) in addition to salary (15% recommended)	3% of salary following one year of employment (not through RPB)
Length of original contract (two years recommended)	N/A

STANDARD BENEFITS FOR THE EDUCATOR, IN ADDITION TO SALARY

Medical-Hospitalization	X	Moving Allowance	X	Books & Periodicals		Sabbatical	
Major Medical Insurance	X	Professional Dues	X	Congregational Membership	X	Cell Phone	X
Dental Insurance	X	ARJE Conference		Religious School Tuition	X	Laptop Computer	X
Long Term Disability Insurance	X	URJ Biennial		Early Childhood Tuition	X	Israel Trips	
		Regional URJ Gathering					
Other (please specify)	Conference budget						

Social Security is required by Federal Law

Is this position being listed with any other professional placement service ?	Yes
If "YES" please indicate which one and the title by which it is being listed	Jewish Jobs, same title

In making this request to the ARJE PLACEMENT SERVICE, the congregation/institution agrees that it will	
A	In keeping with the high ideals of Reform Judaism, not exclude a candidate from consideration based on age, gender, sexual orientation or marital status;
B	Keep the ARJE Placement Service informed of ALL interviews and their outcomes;
C	Reimburse all travel and related expenses for an Educator invited for an interview;
D	Arrange the terms of its contract and/or letter of agreement with its Educator-Designate following the principles of the document entitled <i>GUIDELINE FOR EDUCATOR CONGREGATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS</i> ("The Blue Book"), as adopted and recommended May 1988 by the Board of Trustees of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, the Central Conference of American Rabbis, and the National Association of Temple Educators;
E	On acceptance of the contract and/or letter of intent by both the congregation/institution and the Educator-Designate, forward a copy of the contract and/or letter of agreement for the files of the Placement Service, ALL files being confidential.
F	NOTIFY THE ARJE PLACEMENT OFFICE OF THE NAME OF THE EDUCATOR-DESIGNATE WHEN THE SEARCH IS FINALIZED.

Name of person completing this form and position in congregation / institution	Rabbi Amy Ross, Director of Learning and Innovation
Signature	Rabbi Amy Ross

CHAIRPERSON OF THE EDUCATOR SEARCH COMMITTEE

NAME	N/A	POSITION
STREET ADDRESS		
CITY, STATE/PROVINCE, ZIP CODE/POSTAL ZONE		
TELEPHONE NUMBER		FAX
E-MAIL		
Resumes of applicants should be sent to the following persons e-mail address(es) (please include more than one e-mail address):		
yle@tedallas.org		

IF THE CONGREGATION/INSTITUTION HAS A MISSION STATEMENT,
PLEASE ENCLOSE A COPY

ATTACHMENT I

JOB DESCRIPTION

TITLE: Kindergarten through 6th grade Engagement Coordinator

DEPARTMENT: Youth Learning + Engagement

REPORTS TO: Associate Director of Learning and Innovation (ADLI)

HOURS: Full-time (Tuesday – Friday and Sundays during the school year)

POSITION SUMMARY:

The K-6th grade Engagement Coordinator will manage and operate all engagement opportunities for K-6th grade, including the Sunday program and Junior Youth Group. This position will also organize and implement family holiday celebrations for Temple Emanu-El in partnership with our Engagement staff. This position will support the ADLI in the management and operation of the Sunday and Hebrew programs, as well as the K-6 faculty.

PROFESSIONAL REQUIREMENTS AND SKILLS:

- Ability to relate well to kids and adults of all ages
- Excellent leadership and programming skills
- Excellent executive skills, written and verbal communication skills
- Ability to work independently and as part of a team
- Highly organized and able to handle multiple responsibilities
- Proficient at Microsoft Office, including Word, Excel, Power Point, and Outlook

GENERAL DUTIES:

1. Create and implement programming for Youth Emanu-El, focusing on Kindergarten through 6th grade. Work to ensure appropriate rabbinic involvement in Youth Emanu-El programming. Work closely with the URJ Greene Family Camp on year-round programming, including retreats and summer camp recruitment.
2. Coordinate and manage all social justice opportunities for Kindergarten – 6th grade families, including Family *Mitzvah* Corps, in collaboration with the Director, Social Justice and Small Group Engagement. Create and implement new social justice opportunities for families and attend Temple's Social Justice Council meetings on behalf of YL+E.
3. Support the ADLI in managing the Sunday and Hebrew programs for Kindergarten through 6th grade students, including, but not limited to:
 - a. Planning grade-level and other special programs.
 - b. Managing Community Movers (5th & 6th grade family education) program.
 - c. Preparing and distribute mensch moment cards twice per year.
4. Vision, plan and implement Shabbat and holiday worship experiences for families, including *Sukkot*, *Simchat Torah*, *Chanukah* and *Purim*. Support DLI to implement youth and family High Holy Day services.
5. Attend YL+E and Temple-wide events that include Kindergarten through 6th graders and/or their families, including family worship and holiday celebrations.
6. Recruit Kindergarten through 6th grade students for URJ Greene Family Camp year-round and summer experiences and contribute to their development and programming. Serve as faculty at the URJ Greene Family Camp for one week during the summer and staff retreats during the school year.
7. Perform other duties as requested by the ADLI.

ATTACHMENT II



Core Values Statement

Temple Emanu-El is a vibrant Reform Jewish community that strives to be a place of sacred encounter. It is a place where learning, prayer and deeds change people's understanding of themselves, of their world and their responsibilities in it.

We affirm the power of Jewish learning to create and deepen Jewish identity and commitment. Life-long Jewish learning – from childhood through adulthood -- brings Jewish values to our daily lives, nurtures spiritual experiences, and both anchors and challenges us to reach out to a world in need.

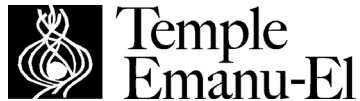
We celebrate the potential of prayer to help us reach out to God, root ourselves in community, and affirm the most deeply held values of our people and our faith. Jewish observance at home and at Temple nurtures and inspires both faith and deed. We see the creation of enriching Jewish homes as a fundamental obligation of synagogue life.

At Temple Emanu-El, the creation of a vibrant and meaningful community is both an enduring value and an ongoing endeavor. For us, community means a sense of warm welcome, meaningful relationships, and mutual responsibility. We affirm a sense of both valued boundaries and a great respect for diversity. We celebrate our identity as a multi-generational community. We envision the relationship between congregants, rabbis and staff as a partnership based upon mutual respect, shared Jewish commitment, and ongoing Jewish growth. That relationship is manifest in a governance structure which is democratic and reflects the diversity of our congregation.

We emphasize the ethical ideals of social justice at the core of the Jewish tradition. This covenantal obligation frames our actions in terms of our relationship to God and to Jewish tradition. It is Temple Emanu-El's obligation to engage in the ongoing task of world repair. We value being an integral part of and contributor to the total Dallas community.

As Reform Jews, we exist in vital relationship to our own movement and to the Jewish people as a whole. We understand that a fundamental connection exists between Temple Emanu-El and the Jews in Israel and the rest of the world, and we acknowledge our responsibility in promoting the concept of pluralism in the Jewish world.

ATTACHMENT III



Congregational Focus Statement Background

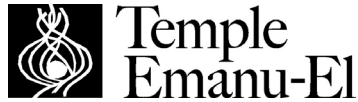
Introduction

Since its introduction in 2008, the Temple's Congregational Focus Statement has provided guidance to lay leadership and staff regarding use of our staff, time, calendar, volunteer and financial resources. This is a supplement to the Core Values Statement, not a replacement. Over the last several years, our Focus Statements have enabled leadership to target areas of emphasis for special attention and improvement, often resulting in positive change.

This Focus Statement, our fifth, is built on current needs and issues. It's the product of a series of conversations with a wide cross-section of Temple leaders, as well as our clergy and staff. While the ambitions contained in this statement are large, they're vital to our future.

Key Ideas

- The Focus Statement is intended to be utilized over a period of 18-24 months. Temple leadership plans to continue to review the Focus Statement periodically to adjust focus areas as needed.
- The areas identified in this Focus Statement, first and foremost, flow from our Core Values of worship, learning, community and social justice.
- Past areas of focus remain important priorities, but have progressed greatly with the attention received in recent years. Previous areas of focus will continue to be key pillars of our community. Likewise, our effort to connect people in genuine and meaningful relationship with one another now becomes more specific, as we identify areas for improving Congregational engagement.
- The importance of a Temple program, activity or group is measured more than by whether it's mentioned in this Focus Statement. Not being included in this Focus Statement may mean that focused attention is not necessary at this time or it may be that we may emphasize that program, department or area in the future.
- The Focus Statement is a tool for lay and professional leadership to guide and coordinate the planning of programs and to make decisions about the use of congregational resources. It's not a replacement for creativity, assessment and evaluation of programs, activities and resources as a part of decision-making by leadership.



**Congregational Focus Statement
January 2017**

*Temple Emanu-El is a vibrant Reform Jewish community that strives to be a place of sacred encounter. It is a place where learning, prayer and deeds change people's understanding of themselves, of their world and their responsibilities in it.
(excerpt from Temple's Core Values Statement)*

Looking at our beautiful new campus, we celebrate that the “architecture of possibility” has become a reality. We now focus our efforts on the goal of filling our new spaces with engaged members, meaningful relationships, and sacred encounters. Over the next 18-24 months we will focus on the areas below to achieve this goal.

It's long been true that there are many pathways to engagement at Temple. Many of our members help create community through participation in Sh'ma Groups, while others work to repair our world by volunteering, whether in the community or here at Temple. Still others regularly participate in prayer or study. We might visualize our members' engagement and their efforts to live our Core Values like this:



While many members engage in one of these areas, there are others who engage in multiple areas. Over the next 12-18 months, we'll use the areas of focus below to help us engage more members in more areas of Temple life.

Changing our World by Facilitating Difficult Conversations

Jewish history provides a shining example for all of us on how to tackle difficult issues. The Talmud records the often-passionate arguments of the Rabbis on the issues of the day. It tells us which side carried the day, but it also preserves the positions and arguments of the minority. Then, as now, it's important for us to embrace difficult conversations and to strive to engage with those with whom we may disagree passionately, and with respect and civility for each other's views and experiences.

In this spirit, we'll create opportunities and forums for our members to learn about and engage with one another and with the broader community around issues and challenges facing our members, our community and our world. We'll continue our long tradition of social justice advocacy, organizing and volunteering. We'll also embrace and deepen our connection to Israel, with all of its complexity. And, we'll support efforts like Sh'ma Emanu-El, our small group initiative which builds relationships, and Sukkat Shalom, which helps our members navigate challenges in their lives.

Engaging Children, Teens and their Families

We've made tangible progress since this area of focus appeared in Temple's first Focus Statement in 2008. As an example, the Temple budget now funds at least 50% of the Youth Learning and Engagement budget each year. There is, however, still work to be done.

To that end, we'll direct renewed energy, creativity and resources to supporting the lay and professional members of our YL+E team as they work to create experiences and curriculum that engage our youth with each other, with our community and with their Judaism. We'll also support Sh'ma Emanu-El's effort to grow and expand Sh'ma Family Groups that seek to create spaces for meaningful conversation, relevant learning and deeper Jewish relationships for both children and parents.

Strengthening Temple's Role as a Spiritual Center for our Members

The ever-present technology that promises to connect us instead puts us in a place where we are, far too often, alone together. As an antidote, we need to create more time and space for our members to pause, reflect, refresh and renew.

The Prayer Project recently entered the second phase of its work to provide perspective and input to our clergy as they create more meaningful and moving prayer and worship experiences. Members of our clergy, staff and lay leadership will devote significant time and energy to this transformational effort. Additionally, we'll seek out and support efforts to engage a broad cross-section of Temple members in study and prayer.

Creating Lasting Structures for Deeper Long-Term Engagement

The Engagement Task Force has completed the initial phase of its work, setting out an ambitious vision of a community where our "members and participants say at all stages of life: 'Through Temple, I've discovered what it means to be part of something greater than myself—where I can wrestle with big life questions without being judged. Temple is a place where we can put our Jewish values into action—and this is more powerful when done as a community than as an individual.'"

To help realize that vision, we'll support the Engagement Task Force as it moves through its next phase, during which it will research and develop actionable plans in four key areas of opportunity:

- Deepening a relational culture among our Temple family that encourages more meaningful opportunities to build people-to-people relationships;
- Creating training opportunities for both staff and lay leaders that increase knowledge and understanding of the tools necessary for building an engaged, relational community;
- Committing to the development, support and maintenance of multi-faceted and nimble communication strategies that foster connections within the Temple community and beyond; and
- Aligning our governance and staffing to create a shared vision of engagement

ATTACHMENT IV

COMMUNITY PROFILE

The Dallas Jewish Community

Our congregation and this city grew up together, ever since our founding in 1872. The Dallas Jewish community is warm, welcoming and diverse, with excellent relations among the different Jewish denominations and a true commitment to the strengthening of common bonds through supportive agencies, caring individuals, and a commitment to Federation-synagogue relations. The Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex is now home to approximately 50,000 Jews and 19 congregations. There are a number of Jewish day schools in Dallas, including Levine Academy (a Solomon Schechter School) and Akiba/Yavneh Academy (affiliated with the Orthodox movement), both of which welcome Reform Jewish students.

Other outstanding communal institutions include the Jewish Community Center, Jewish Family Service, Jewish Federation of Greater Dallas (including the Dallas Jewish Community Relations Council and the Center for Jewish Education), Legacy Senior Communities (with two campuses and a third in the planning stages), and the Dallas Holocaust Museum Center for Education and Tolerance. Dallas is also home to the office of North Texas Hillel.

Our City

Dallas is a thriving, diverse, and energetic city, welcoming to singles, couples and families alike. Why have so many of us made Dallas home? Is it because Dallas offers the nation's largest arts district chock-full of beautiful buildings designed by the world's foremost architects? Could it be the wildly successful beautiful new downtown park or the stunning architectural landmark science museum? Perhaps it's the graceful bridge to unite disparate parts of the city, or plenty of professional sporting events to attend in a sports-crazy town. It could be the remodeled farmers' market to celebrate the bounteous growing season that leads to a renaissance in farm-to-table cuisine, or the presence of numerous colleges and universities, including SMU and the University of Texas at Dallas, each of which is only a few miles from our synagogue. Perhaps it is Dallas's focus on reviving inner city neighborhoods into cool, urban, eclectic places to live. And speaking of neighborhoods, Dallas offers excellent and diverse housing options that rank among the most affordable housing of any major city in the nation.

When you are ready to explore beyond Dallas, nearby Fort Worth features rodeos, cowboy fun and outstanding museums, including the Kimbell Art Museum, one of the best small art museums in the nation. Two local airports make travel easy, especially to the tourist attractions of New Mexico, Arizona and Colorado.

More importantly that bricks and mortar, though, nice people like you come to Dallas because you will never meet more wonderful, caring people. They will feed you for months when you are in crisis, dance with you at your simchas, ask you how you are and really mean it. You will meet other singles, or other parents to share the journeys of child-rearing, and make friendships that will bless your life.