



2020 Community Leader Interfaith Award



Mara Koven-Gelman and Dr. Irwin Gelman

Mara is the Director of the Buffalo Jewish Community Relations Council, an organization that seeks to sustain our caring community in WNY, while building meaningful and collaborative relationships with other faith, ethnic, and cultural communities.

Mara previously worked as a grant writer for the Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy and was the lead consultant for the Buffalo Jewish Community Study. Prior to her appointment as JCRC Director, she was the Director of the Holocaust Resource Center.

Mara is proud of participating in the Buffalo Federation/NFJC 2017 Interfaith Clergy mission to Israel where she built a strong bond and friendship with many diverse community leaders. To quote her friend and mission participant, Rev. Craig Pridgen, "The thing I love most about the Israel trip is all the good things we continue to do together."

Irwin is the Director of Research Integration and a Distinguished Professor of Oncology in the Department of Cancer Genetics and Genomics at Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center. He founded Veronomics, a company that increases matching of cancers with their targeted drug therapies.

Irwin is a passionate top participant and fundraiser for Ride for Roswell. He is a Cantor, and the force and voice behind the rejuvenation of Congregation Beth Abraham. The congregation has monthly services, and invites all to experience a spiritual, fun Jewish Sabbath.

Irwin is the past president of the Holocaust Resource Center, and is currently on the Executive Board of the Jewish Community Center.

For their shared interests and contributions to people of all backgrounds, the NFJC is proud to present Mara Koven-Gelman and Dr. Irwin Gelman with the 2020 Community Leader Interfaith Award.