

Thank you so much for this award and for this recognition. Thanks to my family for being here and thank you to Vic, the staff and board of JCA for all of your hard work. It's an honor to share this award with Frank and Steve and I also want to stress we share this award with the original organizing committee that helped us form the organization – Randi Roth, Allan Malkus, Rick Kahn, Steve Foldes, Marci Shapiro, and many other Jewish community leaders who played a roll in helping us to shape the organization.

When I get my e-mail alert from JCA, I am always thrilled to read about the recent work and projects, but I'm also incredibly proud to see the organization thriving and evolving. For me, there is a great feeling of satisfaction in knowing that the need we saw, the need for an organization with the vision that JCA has, was real, and has given and continues to give voice to our prophetic tradition of seeking justice and engaging in the world around us. And in so doing, we help to sustain, revitalize and enrich our own community.

One of my many fond memories of working with JCA was the project *Intersecting Rhythms*, a Jewish African American cultural arts festival that included film, theatre, dance, dialogue, music and visual arts. It involved collaboration with a number of different community institutions, and celebrated culture and arts in a political way. In many ways, my involvement in that project has guided me on my own journey in pursuing art and exploring how art can be a vehicle for change.

How can art be used to make change? Certainly art can inspire, inform, compel and encourage. But more importantly, the act of being creative is an essential component of organizing anything, whether it be a painting or a campaign that fights for immigrant rights. It is the act of being creative that is critically needed at this time in our world and thankfully, is exemplified by the work of JCA.

I always have felt that one of the reasons it was such a joy to be a part of helping to shape this organization was that it was a creative process. It's also what our tradition teaches us to do – creatively reinterpret our stories and apply the lessons to our lives today. When we formed JCA we didn't have a road map to follow, so we spent a lot of time imagining what we wanted the organization to look like. It was a creative process.

I am happy to say that the tradition continues – the work of JCA continues to be creative, engaged, dynamic and evolving in ways Frank and I could never have imagined. Artists as well as community organizers cultivate new ways of seeing and new ways of being. I want to thank the JCA staff, board and members for your work in creating new ways for us to act justly, be joyous and celebrate our faith.

Rachel Breen

Co-founder of Jewish Community Action

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