

GET TO KNOW THE 2020-21 SISTERHOOD LEADERSHIP TEAM

...a group of committed women with diverse talents and deep experience...

Sandi Saft / Executive Leader-Programming

A native of Miami, Sandi graduated from USF and settled in Central Florida with her husband Allen in 1982 after their careers briefly took them to Ohio and Pittsburgh. From that time on, COS became the 'center of their universe', with Sandi assuming a number of leadership roles both at COS and in the greater Orlando Jewish community. She served as President of the synagogue Board in the mid-90s and sat on the Board of Jewish Federation of Greater Orlando for several years. Sandi was also involved with the startup of the Jewish Pavilion. She was honored to participate on the design team for the new COS building and on the Kehillah project for the COS Centennial. In recognition of Sandi and her family's strong commitment to COS, her father generously donated to the congregation a Torah that her grandparents rescued after the Holocaust. In recent years, Sandi has served as a volunteer with Sisterhood, leading Programming for many meetings and events.

Professionally, Sandi started and grew a successful specialty commercial window treatment business over 26 years, working on hundreds of local and national construction projects while watching Orlando grow! She was also active in women-owned business organizations and construction organizations. Since retiring, she volunteers with the Small Business Development Center.

Sandi's 2 sons were 'raised' at COS and the JCC, and the Safts now enjoy 4 grandchildren in Tampa and Denver.

Sandi wants to help Sisterhood grow in a new direction, engage with more participation and become more integral and relevant to our synagogue community.

Erika Siegel / Youth and Education Manager

After growing up in Miami, Erika moved to the area in 1993 to attend college at UCF where she received her Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education. She started her teaching career and married her husband Scott, but a job opportunity brought them back to South Florida for 10 years. After having their first two children, the Siegels decided in 2011 that they wanted to raise their family back in their favorite city-Orlando! Erika has been a member of COS since 2015 and served as Chair of the Education Committee from 2017-2020.

Erika originally worked full time in teaching, then transitioned to part-time after having her two older children. Now with 3 children, Erika serves as a substitute teacher.

Erika has been married to Scott, her high school sweetheart, since 2001, and their 3 children include Ainsley and Abby, who are both involved in the Hebrew School madrichim program, and younger son Noah.

Erika's hope is for Sisterhood to form a collaborative relationship with the Youth and Education program, with each serving as a helpful resource for the other. She hopes to attract a wider range of COS women with school-age children and find ways to engage in fun social settings, or by exploring Jewish history, arts, and current events.

Sarah Siegel / Program Manager

Sarah grew up in Northern New Jersey, graduated from Rutgers University with a BA in Spanish and subsequently, a MEd in Bilingual Education. She moved to Central Florida with her husband Adam and their three children 9 years ago, and the family joined COS 4 years ago. They are active members in the congregation, where her husband is a member of the Finance Committee. Sarah joined the Education Committee 2 years ago, and was asked to join the Hebrew School faculty this past year. She also is involved in the greater Orlando Jewish community as a member of the women's group Gesher/Spark. Sarah helped build programming in the South Orlando area and was a part of the inaugural Gesher Momentum trip to Israel in 2018.

Sarah is a certified teacher in New Jersey and Florida, where she currently is a Spanish 2 Instructor for Florida Virtual School in addition to her position as a Hebrew School teacher at COS. Sarah has also worked in fundraising and business development. When she is not teaching, Sarah enjoys running and staying active.

Both of Sarah's daughters, Cleigh and Addison, serve as madrachas in the Hebrew School, and her son Zachary is a rising 6th grader.

Sarah is very much looking forward to bringing some exciting programming to Sisterhood and making some lifelong friends along the way.

Es Cohen / Executive Leader-Operations

A Pittsburgh native and Duquesne University graduate, Es made a career move to Orlando in 1985 after living in Dallas for 8 years. Having previously belonged to other congregations, she joined COS in 1995. Over the years, Es's involvement with COS has included: Vice President of Operations, member of the Strategic Planning Committee, Co-Chair of the Centennial Gala, and Silent Auction Chair for the 2019 Gala. In addition, she participated in the Kehillah project and co-chaired the Sisterhood mahjong tournament for 3 years.

Though Es started as a banking professional, her career took a turn that led to a deep entwinement between her professional skills and support of the Orlando Jewish community. In 1988 an opportunity became available at the JCC for Es to serve as Membership Assistant, which she jumped at with both of her sons attending preschool there. Es was promoted to Membership Director and remained at the JCC until 2004, when she returned to school for a Master's Degree in Organizational Management. This led to Es joining the staff at Jewish Family Services in 2006 where she served as Director of Development until 2013. She worked part time at the Holocaust Center for a period, and currently assists her attorney son on a part-time basis at his law firm.

Es met her husband Rick through a singles program at the JCC, and they will soon celebrate their 20th anniversary! Though Es's daughter Shayna sadly passed away at 17 months due to a brain tumor, her legacy is joyously kept alive through Shayna's Village at the JCC Preschool. Es and Rick have 4 additional children between them, and 2 grandchildren in the area. Both of Es's sons, Justin and Matthew Presser, are actively involved in the JCC and have sat on the Board.

Es's goal for our Sisterhood is to bring a new level of excitement, interest and activity for our congregation "sisters" to become involved in. In the new board structure, Es sees the creation of opportunities for learning, sharing and meeting new friends.

Debbie Bellinkoff / Outreach Manager

Debbie grew up in Miami and graduated from the University of Florida with a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration, following which she moved to Central Florida. She has been a member of COS for 30 years. Active in Sisterhood, Debbie has co-chaired the mahjong tournament for the last 4 years.

Debbie and her husband Irwin were business owners for 35 years, of which 25 were spent running a successful Specialty Beverage Distribution company. Debbie retired 4 years ago.

Although Debbie knew her husband from Hebrew School in Miami, they only reconnected in Orlando. The Bellinkoffs have 2 sons, both of whom went to Hebrew School and had their Bar Mitzvahs at COS.

As Outreach Manager, Debbie hopes to bring more women of COS together so that they can personally connect. She would like to foster a more diverse membership: new and veteran, older and younger, married, single, women with nursery school and school-aged children, empty nesters, working women. This will enable us to build on our shared values and vision for the COS community. Debbie is very excited about the "updated" vision of Sisterhood this year and is looking forward to getting to know each member by name.

Jaime Gold / Financial Manager

Jaime grew up in Plantation in South Florida and graduated from the University of Florida. She moved to Central Florida 20 years ago, after college, following her college boyfriend Tayler Gold, who was to become her husband! Jaime has been a member of COS for the last 15 years, was on the Education Committee for the last 8 years, and served on the Board of Trustees for one term several years ago.

As an engineer, Jaime spent the first ten years of her career working for a consultant that did both inspection and design for existing buildings. In that capacity she learned roofing and building envelope while doing work for Disney and several large hotels and apartment complexes. Ten years ago, Jaime became a forensic engineer, determining the cause of loss for insurance companies when there is a claim (mostly residential), and acting as their expert if the claim gets litigated. She is also an active member of two professional organizations for roof consultants.

Jaime's husband Tayler, one of four sons of COS members Penny and Barry Gold, had his Bar Mitzvah at COS. Her son Mason graduated from Hebrew School at COS and is now a madrich, and her daughter Layla is entering seventh grade, with her Bat Mitzvah scheduled for next February.

Jaime is very excited to join Sisterhood and expand her COS participation beyond the Education Committee. She recalls that when growing up her mother was very active in her synagogue's Sisterhood, and the women she met there are still her best friends

Susan Rosen / Communications Manager

A New York native, Susan is a graduate of Yale University and Weill Cornell Medical College. She and her husband Stephen are retired physicians who relocated to Central Florida in 2018 to be close to their younger son and his family in the area. They resided in St. Louis, MO and Ann Arbor, MI early in their careers, and then relocated back to the Northeast where over a 32-year period they lived in New York, Connecticut, and most recently New Jersey. Needless to say, they have belonged to a number of synagogues! In Westport, CT, the family joined a new Conservative congregation in 1993, and with both her sons in Hebrew School, Susan served for several years on the Education Committee. Upon coming to the Orlando area, the Rosens joined COS and Susan has volunteered as a job coach for RAISE, the Federation sponsored job training program for adults with disabilities.

Susan practiced ophthalmology prior to becoming a pharmaceutical industry executive overseeing clinical research and the evaluation of patient drug safety at several global companies. Susan was active in

professional and industry-related organizations, and frequently made presentations at related educational meetings.

Susan has 2 sons, and in addition to her 2 grandchildren in the area, has 5 grandchildren in New York.

Susan is excited to join a group of talented women seeking to build a broader tent for Sisterhood membership and participation, and she hopes to use her prior communication and business-related skills to support the team.

Roslyn Leventhal / Secretary

Roslyn was born and raised in Atlantic City, New Jersey. She graduated from the University of Miami with a degree in education in 1971 and embarked on a teaching career in Ocean City, NJ. She met her husband Stuart, who lived in Orlando, while visiting her parents in Florida on vacation. After two years of long-distance dating, they married 36 years ago, and Roslyn moved to this area. The Leventhals have been members of COS for 26 years. Roslyn was in charge of Ma'asim Tovim for 5 years, served on the Board for 2 years, and has been on the Gala Committee and Membership Committee in addition to a stint in the choir.

Roslyn was a teacher for 38 years, both in NJ and Central Florida, and has been retired for 9 years. She has put her professional skills to good use while volunteering at the Holocaust Center as an educator for the 6th grade field trips that visit the center. In addition, Roslyn spent several summers at the Summer Institute instructing other teachers on how to teach Holocaust curriculum to their students.

Roslyn has one son, Harrison, who completed Hebrew School at COS and then went on to Hebrew HS for a year. After volunteering in the Israeli Defense Forces for 2 years and finishing his degree at UCF, he joined the US Army for 5 years. Still in the Army Reserves, he lives in Virginia and is father of Roslyn's one-year old grandson.

In her role as Secretary for the Sisterhood Leadership Team, Roslyn hopes to take accurate notes and promptly issue the minutes.

Marjorie Smith / Parliamentarian

After growing up on Long Island, New York, Marj attended the University of Michigan where she received her BS and MS. She later received her JD from Seton Hall University. Following marriage to her husband Dustan in 1971, the Smiths lived in Illinois for close to a decade before moving to New Jersey for a job change. Twelve years ago, they relocated to Central Florida to assist Marj's parents as their health declined. They joined COS at that time, and in addition to being active in Sisterhood, Marj sings in the choir and serves as a co-Education VP of the Orlando Chapter of Hadassah.

Marj is a lady of many talents! Her first career was as a speech pathologist working with stroke patients. After moving to NJ, inspired by her husband's induction into the NJ bar, Marj decided to attend law school herself. Following work as an attorney, she became the Municipal Clerk of her town. Having always had an interest in medicine, Marj and one of her sons took an EMT course together, joined the town's volunteer rescue squad, and later became EMT and CPR instructors. She currently works part-time for her son's medical billing company in NJ, writing appeals for claims not paid by insurance companies.

Marj has 3 children and 6 grandchildren. Her oldest son, daughter and 3 of her grandchildren live in NJ; her middle son and her other 3 grandchildren live in Lake Mary.

Marj looks forward to working with a talented group of women, and in her role as Parliamentarian, she hopes to assist Es and Sandi in running "kosher" meetings. She also hopes to proffer ideas for the future planning and operation of Sisterhood.