



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE • AUGUST 15, 2019 • CONTACT: Joyce Kamen, 513.543.8109

The American Jewish Archives and the Leo Baeck Institute to Host Rare
Conversation on *Women in the Rabbinate Then and Now*
with Rabbis Sally Priesand and Sonja Pilz

The Jacob Rader Marcus Award for Outstanding Contributions to the Study of the American Jewish Experience will be presented at the event to philanthropists Jay & Shira Ruderman

CINCINNATI, OH:---The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives, along with the Leo Baeck Institute, will present a conversation with Rabbis Sally J. Priesand and Sonja K. Pilz on *Women in the Rabbinate Then and Now*.

The program will take place on Tuesday, September 17, 2019 beginning with a 4:30pm reception, followed by the program at 5:30pm, at The Jewish Foundation of Cincinnati International Learning Center at The Marcus Center, located on the historic Cincinnati Campus of Hebrew Union College - Jewish Institute of Religion; 3101 Clifton Avenue, Cincinnati, Ohio, 45220. The event is FREE and open to the public.

Dr. Gary P. Zola, Executive Director of The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives & the Edward M. Ackerman Family Distinguished Professor of the American Jewish Experience & Reform Jewish History; and William Weitzer, Executive Director of the Leo Baeck Institute (LBI) will



*Rabbi Sally J. Priesand (top)
and Rabbi Sonja K. Pilz*



moderate and participate in the evening's conversation. LBI is a research library and archive (New York | Berlin) focused on the history of German-speaking Jews.

-MORE-



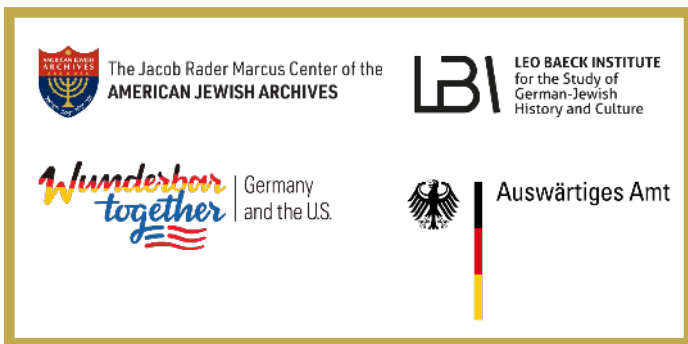
The evening's program will begin with a special presentation of The Jacob Rader Marcus Award to Jay & Shira Ruderman in recognition of their outstanding contributions to the study of the American Jewish Experience. Recently, the Ruderman Family Foundation funded the establishment of an M.A. Program on the American Jewish Experience at Haifa University. This academic program is unique in Israel. M.A. students study a range of issues pertaining to American Jewish history, contemporary American society and the long-lasting and important bond that links the Jews of America, the State of Israel and Israeli society. Many of the Ruderman M.A. students have come to Cincinnati to study at the American Jewish Archives.



Jay and Shira Ruderman

"It is most fitting that we will hear firsthand about the barriers two pioneering women rabbis had to surmount on their journeys to ascend to the rabbinate; while honoring two outstanding philanthropists whose noble work has focused on inspiring Israelis to enter into the study of Jewish life in America," said Dr. Zola. "The Ruderman Foundation's efforts to help Israelis better

understand American Jewry eases the burden some aspiring women rabbis may feel when wondering if—or how—their rabbinic careers will be affected by their gender. The fascinating stories attendees will hear from the pioneering women rabbis on the panel will powerfully illustrate how much they have impacted the 'then' and 'now' for future women rabbis; and what more must be done to achieve full gender parity on the pulpit."



Event sponsors & presenters

-MORE-



Rabbi Regina Jonas

The story of women in the rabbinate illuminates the connections between German and American Jewish history. When Sally J. Priesand was ordained by Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in Cincinnati in 1972, she became the first woman rabbi in North America. Yet the first woman rabbi in Jewish history was actually a German woman, Regina Jonas (1902-1944), who was murdered at Auschwitz. In 1999, the Abraham Geiger College at the University of Potsdam in Germany was founded and became the first liberal rabbinical seminary in Continental Europe since the Holocaust. Rabbi Sonja Pilz was ordained there in 2015—only five years after the college ordained its first female rabbi, Alina Treiger.

The event begins at 4:30pm with a reception, followed by the presentation of The Jacob R. Marcus Award at 5:30 pm. The panel discussion will begin at 5:50 pm. The event is free, but space is limited. Please RSVP to Susan Boyce, sboyce@huc.edu, or call (513) 487-3000.

###

The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives, founded in 1947 by its namesake on the historic campus of the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, is committed to preserving a documentary heritage of the religious, organizational, economic, cultural, personal, social and family life of American Jewry. The Marcus Center contains over 15,000 linear feet of archives, manuscripts, nearprint materials, photographs, audio and videotapes, microfilm, and genealogical materials.

The Leo Baeck Institute – New York | Berlin is a research library and archive focused on the history of German-speaking Jews. Its extensive library, archival, and art collections comprise one of the most significant repositories of primary source material and scholarship on the centuries of Jewish life in Central Europe before the Holocaust.