



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Assemblymember Irwin Honors Rabbi Amy Bernstein as 2023 Woman of the Year

SACRAMENTO – Every year, the California Legislative Women’s Caucus sponsors the annual “Woman of the Year” celebration as part of Women’s History Month. This year, Assemblymember Jacqui Irwin (D-Thousand Oaks) named Pacific Palisades resident, Rabbi Amy Bernstein, as her 2023 Woman of the Year. A ceremony was held on Monday, March 20, 2023 in the Assembly Chambers recognizing Rabbi Bernstein for being part of “Women Making Herstory.”

“Rabbi Bernstein is a trailblazer who has fought for equity and inclusion within her faith. As a member of the LGBTQ+ community, Rabbi Bernstein knows first-hand the obstacles one can face, and has done so with dignity and grace,” **said Assemblymember Jacqui Irwin**. “Her work in the community providing support and philanthropic giving through various faith-based organizations is remarkable and makes her an excellent choice as my 2023 Woman of the Year.”

At age 16, Rabbi Bernstein left yeshiva when she realized the school’s values conflicted with her understanding of Judaism. She later found her spiritual home and began studying under a female Rabbi at the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College in Atlanta. Originally ordained in 1997 she spent 14 years serving in Duluth, Minnesota before coming to Kehillat Israel in 2010 as associate Rabbi. In 2014 she was appointed as the Senior Rabbi where she continues to serve her community.

As the Senior Rabbi of Kehillat Israel, considered one of the largest Reconstructionist synagogues in the country, Rabbi Bernstein leads her congregation that includes the philanthropic organization, Kellihat Israel Tzedakah Teens, who have donated over \$400,000 to national and international nonprofits in the past 15 years. The Mitzvah Circle is another organization within the synagogue that provides spiritual, social, educational, and philanthropic programs and support.

"In these fractious and challenging times I am deeply grateful for work that is about building relationships, creating community, and contributing to making the world a more respectful and

supportive place for all people,” said **Rabbi Bernstein**. “I am so honored to have been chosen to receive this award from among so many talented women doing important work in the 42nd Assembly District. I pledge to use whatever publicity it garners to further the mission of all who are working to make our society more welcoming, more reflective and more enlightened.”

Rabbi Bernstein earned her Bachelor’s Degree from Northwestern University with a double major in literature and anthropology. Prior to her ordination, she worked as a clinical supervisor at the Feminist Women’s Health Center in Atlanta for four years. In addition to her work, Rabbi Bernstein performs as a member of the vocal group, Three Altos, and recently appeared as a Rabbi in the movie, “You People.” Rabbi Bernstein lives in Pacific Palisades with her partner, Judy Griffith, her teen daughter, Eliana, and their rescue Chihuahua, Olivia.

Assemblymember Irwin’s website: <https://a42.asmdc.org>

Assemblymember Jacqui Irwin represents California’s 42nd Assembly District, which includes portions of both Ventura and Los Angeles Counties; including all of Agoura Hills, Bel Air, Beverly Glen, Brentwood, Casa Conejo, Calabasas, Hidden Hills, Lake Sherwood, Malibu, Moorpark, Oak Park, Pacific Palisades, Santa Susana, Simi Valley, Thousand Oaks, Topanga, Westlake Village, and portions of Camarillo.

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