



PATHWAYS

A New Vision for Children
& their Families in 2020

**Meet our Extraordinary Team
of Pathways Educators**



Espy Almeida is from Ecuador and is a native Spanish speaker; she now lives in Chevy Chase, Maryland. Espy has worked at the Gan for 32 years. She holds a CDA certificate in early childhood development. Espy says that the most important thing in her life is being surrounded by children; they teach her new things all of the time and also make her happy. In her free time, she likes to walk in nature and travel around the world. She looks forward to working with young children for many years to come!



Lauren Chambers has been in the Early Childhood field for the past 15 years, spending the last six at the Gan. Children have the capability of making the gloomiest of days much brighter with their innocent humor and strong willingness to learn through the world around them. Every day is exciting when you're a teacher! Lauren lives in Maryland with her husband Terrance and two boys, Terrance Jr. (T.J.) and Landon.



Becca Crompton is a passionate early childhood educator who recently earned her Master's degree in Early Childhood Special Education. Inspired by her grandmother, a Latin and English teacher, Becca hopes to continue the legacy of igniting her students' curiosity and love of learning. This is her fourth year at the Gan and fifth year teaching total; she is looking forward to the adventure Pathways presents.



Diane Fernheimer has been an early childhood teacher/educator for many years. One thing she enjoys about being an educator is listening to children and having conversations with them. Diane comes from a family of five and is a proud aunt to three amazing nephews! She's very excited to be part of this brand new Pathways program!



Adelina Guerrero is from El Salvador and now lives in Maryland with her husband. She loves working with children because she believes that they are flowers in a garden. Adelina has been working with children for the past 25 years and looks forward to continuing to serve the leaders of tomorrow.



Janet Harari spent most of her life in the New York metro area. She graduated from Rutgers University and has been an early childhood educator for more than twenty years. Janet has been teaching at the Gan since 2010 after relocating to the DC area with her family. She has three adult children and lives in Rockville, Maryland.

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Soon**

Verdina Powell has been working in childcare for over 18 years. She has always enjoyed working with infants/toddlers, as it brings her great joy to see their development stages! She is a proud grandmother of six grandsons and really enjoys spending time with her family!



Neidia Ramsay-Swann was born in Jamaica and grew up in Bowie, Maryland. She started her career as an administrative assistant with middle school-aged children and discovered her love for young children after starting her own family. Neidia opened her own home-based daycare in 2012. She joined the Gan faculty in 2016 and is currently working on her associate degree in early childhood education



Ashley Ross is a native Washingtonian who has lived in the DC area her whole life. She took three early childhood education courses while in high school and has worked at the Gan since 2009. She hopes to one day have her own childcare center and recently welcomed her daughter Amina to the extended Gan family!



Kristein Ross has been in early childhood since 2004 working with ages 6 weeks to 10 years of age. Before she came to the Gan she was a teacher at an early childcare center in Maryland for 8 years. She has been working in the Gan since 2014 and is currently attending Trinity Washington University to get her Associates degree in Early Childhood. She also has two school-age children at home. She loves being around children every day; they put a smile on her face.

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Kristen Russi is passionate about early childhood education, adores working with children, and is thrilled to be starting her second year at The Gan. Her favorite activity is anything involving art. She also enjoys travel, reading, fashion, cooking, and spending time with her family.



Ben Wacks has been with Adas Israel since 2012, starting as a teacher with the Religious School, and then joined the Gan family in 2016. On the side, he mentors students in helping prepare for their B'nai Mitzvah. He loves celebrating Shabbat with the children and running around exploring outside. He's made DC his home since he moved from South Florida in 2008. He enjoys volunteering and connecting with other young professionals in DC through Federation, Sixth and I, and many others.



Su Watson has been a teacher for more than thirty years. She taught at Ohr Kodesh before coming to Adas and has been with the Gan for the last nine years. She also worked with parents of newborns while she was in nursing school.



Erin Weisman is an early childhood educator who has worked in public, charter, and private schools in Los Angeles, New Orleans, Copenhagen, and Washington, D.C. She is inspired by the Reggio Emilia teaching philosophy and believes strongly in meeting children where they are developmentally. Once, a student called her “Alexa,” mistaking her for his at-home Amazon device.



Ebonee Williams sees teaching as more than just a job – it is more fun than anything else! Every day is a different adventure filled with lots of learning, not just for the children but for her as well. Seeing all the children having so much fun, not just learning but engaging with each other, fills her heart and also makes her look forward to the next day. She doesn't just teach to have a career, but she teaches to build relationships with all children – and she learns from them as well.



Sally Heckleman, Music Specialist

Sally has been an early childhood music educator in the Washington DC area for close to 30 years. Two years ago she officially joined the staff, teaching music to all the children in the Gan. In addition to her love of teaching music, she also serves as the director of spirituality and family experience at Kol Shalom and is currently studying in the Aleph cantorial ordination program. Sally lives with her husband in Silver Spring, MD and has four grown children.



Robin Jacobson, Librarian

Robin has been sharing stories with children at Adas Israel for almost 10 years. She loves the insights that children have into characters and the strategies they propose to resolve plot difficulties. Robin lives in MD with her husband; they have two grown-up daughters who both graduated from the Gan!

Val Tompkins, Movement Specialist

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