

For Immediate Release

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## **CAJM Announces**

### ***Responsibility & Empowerment: A Civic Role for Jewish Museums***

**The 2018 Annual Conference will take place in Washington DC, February 25 - 28**

New York, NY Feb 23, 2018 - The Council of American Jewish Museums (CAJM) will open its 25th annual conference at Sixth & I Historic Synagogue on Sunday afternoon, February 25th. Jewish museum professionals from around the country will gather for the four-day program which continues at The Wilson Center on Monday, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum on Tuesday, and the National Building Museum on Wednesday.

As the conference title suggests, this year's conference will take a cue from its location in the nation's capital, which is home to museums that explore national and identity narratives from different vantage points. As CAJM's Executive Director, Melissa Martens Yaverbaum shared: "Under the theme *Responsibility and Empowerment*, we'll engage colleagues in conversations about our institutions' responsibilities, challenges, and opportunities—as well as the ways we can empower audiences through our work."

"Museums have long been part of civic life, the public square, and society at large," remarked CAJM's Chair, Deborah Cardin. "Our conference will explore key questions facing museums: how and when should museums discuss current events? How can we draw on history to inform the present? What does bravery look like in a museum, and when is risk unnecessary? What are our ultimate responsibilities—as public centers, Jewish institutions, and keepers of history?" she added.

A highlight of the conference will be Sunday evening's program **An Evening With Museum Advocates**, presented in partnership with the American Alliance of Museums (AAM), and featuring remarks from Senator Ben Cardin. CAJM and AAM members alike will make visits to Capitol Hill as part of Museums Advocacy Day, 2018.

Other program highlights include plenary discussions on bravery and risk-taking, difficult histories, and response and responsibility. Concurrent sessions will cover topics from the practical to the philosophical, and bring voices from diverse museums, cultural and academic institutions, as well as artists and practitioners creating museum exhibitions and programs.

Between the formal programs, CAJM will convene its annual mentorship program that pairs seasoned and emerging professionals, as well as talking circles that speak to member interests ranging from fundraising and marketing, to strategic partnerships, to developing respectful workplace environments.

The full conference program details can be found here:  
[http://cajm.net/uploaded/file/fd.CAJM\\_2018\\_Conference\\_Program.pdf](http://cajm.net/uploaded/file/fd.CAJM_2018_Conference_Program.pdf)

## About CAJM

Since its founding in 1977 under the auspices of the National Foundation for Jewish Culture, the Council of American Jewish Museums (CAJM) has strengthened the Jewish museum field in North America by training museum staff and volunteers, advocating on behalf of Jewish museums, fostering a collegial network, and serving as a nexus for information exchange.

CAJM assists its member institutions in becoming viable, responsible, not-for-profit organizations; welcoming community gathering places; and settings for dynamic programs that spark curiosity about Jewish history and culture in people of all ages and backgrounds.