

# Solomon Schechter Day School



## Gabriella Meltzer

**Current Position:** Doctoral Candidate, New York University School of Global Public Health

**Hometown:** Skokie, IL

**High School:** Nilis North High School

**Current City:** New York, NY

**Undergraduate University:** University of Pennsylvania

How do environmental exposures influence health disparities among children and older adults? This important question is the topic of much discussion today, especially in the age of COVID-19. It is also a focus of Gabriella Meltzer's doctoral research for her dissertation at NYU's School of Global Public Health. Her dissertation examines how the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill affected child and adolescent physical and mental health. Although Gabriella had originally intended to enter medical school after her graduation from the University of Pennsylvania, during her undergraduate studies she shifted her focus to research and policy to improve health on a societal level. After her college graduation, Gabriella moved to New York to work as a global health research associate at the Council on Foreign Relations. When she completes her doctorate at NYU, she hopes to pursue a career in academia, where she can continue to combine her passion for research and teaching.

Gabriella spends the majority of her time conducting research for her dissertation and other projects. When asked what she values most about her work, she noted: "Being able to work closely with and form meaningful relationships with communities that are directly impacted by environmental injustice, and instilling my love of public health in the students I teach and tutor."

When Gabriella is not working, she enjoys experiencing all that New York has to offer with her husband, Gregory, a corporate associate at Willkie Farr & Gallagher LLP. She also loves playing piano and painting, and hosting friends and family for Shabbat dinner. She and Gregory recently joined a shul, and they look forward to getting involved in the shul community.

Gabriella credits Schechter with profoundly shaping her life and impacting both her personal and professional choices. "My Schechter education instilled in me a love of Judaism and learning; the importance of tikkun olam (which drives my work in public health); and a constant sense of curiosity and passion for problem-solving," she said. Gabriella is still close friends with several of her Schechter classmates, and is active in the tristate area alumni community, where she helped organize a Schechter alumni reunion a few years ago. She loves reconnecting with her Schechter classmates and seeing the wonderful things they have accomplished. "We always support one another and are connected in a meaningful way through our fundamental shared experience," she added.

Gabriella would like to thank her Schechter teachers for constantly challenging and inspiring her. She would also like to say mazal tov to her cousins Max and Sarah Wengroff for their graduations from Muhlenberg College and RZJHS. Gabriella's sister, Tamar, made aliyah three years ago, and is currently the director of programming and alumni relations at the Regional Organization for Peace and Economic Security (ROPES). All of the Meltzer, Wengroff, and Hass cousins are proud Schechter graduates, and are incredibly close.



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