



American
Jewish
University

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Dr. Jeffrey Herbst Named as American Jewish University's New President

Los Angeles, CA – June 6, 2018 – Jeffrey Herbst, PhD, educator, scholar and administrator, has been named by the AJU Board of Directors as the new president of American Jewish University after a unanimous vote.

“It is a great honor to be named the new president of American Jewish University,” said Herbst. “To lead a thriving Jewish institution that educates across the lifecycle – engaging children in summer camp, teaching students in undergraduate and graduate programs, preparing the next generation of rabbis and Jewish educators, and educating the wider community is tremendously exciting.”

Most recently, Dr. Herbst was president and CEO of the Newseum and the Newseum Institute in Washington, DC. From 2010 to 2015, he was president of Colgate University, where among other accomplishments he is credited with helping the university complete its nearly half billion-dollar fundraising campaign, leading the development and initial implementation of a university-wide strategic plan, and increasing the diversity and academic caliber of its educational programming.

Dr. Herbst was a Senior Fellow at the Brenthurst Foundation, a two-time Fulbright Scholar, and is currently a trustee of Freedom House. Previously, he has served as provost and executive vice president for academic affairs and professor of political science at Miami University in Ohio and taught at Princeton University for almost two decades.

Herbst earned his bachelor's degree, summa cum laude, from Princeton University, and a master's degree and doctorate in political science from Yale University. He is the author of the award-winning “States and Power in Africa” and, with several co-authors, the just-published “Making Africa Work.” In addition to many books and articles, he has been published in *Foreign Affairs*, *Foreign Policy*, *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal* and many other digital and print publications across the world.

“Jeffrey Herbst is a visionary leader with outstanding experience in higher education and management. He brings to AJU a passion for education, an innovative and entrepreneurial spirit, and a strong commitment to Jewish life and culture,” said Virginia Maas, Chair of the AJU Board of Directors. “AJU will continue to grow and thrive among the vibrant landscape of American Jewry, and the entire Board looks forward to partnering with Dr. Herbst as he guides American Jewish University into the future.”

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Dr. Jeffrey Herbst will become only the fourth president in the history of American Jewish University (formerly known as the University of Judaism), following Dr. Robert Wexler and Dr. David Lieber, who served the institution for a combined 55 years (26 and 29 years respectively), and founding president Dr. Simon Greenberg.

American Jewish University, with two campus locations in Bel-Air and Brandeis, California, offers programming and resources to the Jewish community – locally, regionally and nationally – that far transcend what is typical for colleges and universities.

Founded in 1947 and based on the vision of Rabbi Mordecai Kaplan, the university's innovative academic programs prepare undergraduate, graduate and rabbinical students for rewarding lives as leaders in the Jewish community, as well as society at large. In addition, the university offers a wide array of public lectures, symposia, special institutes, continuing education classes and cultural events through which the larger community can investigate and experience the richness of Jewish life, love of tradition, and the very best of arts and culture.

“American Jewish University's ambition to be a major resource center for Jewish ethics and learning is particularly appropriate at this time when so many bemoan the loss of civility and the uptick in hatred and bigotry that threatens not only the Jewish community but also our society,” added Herbst. “I look forward to working with the entire AJU community to build upon its strong foundation of Jewish learning, culture and leadership training in order to provide innovative and cutting-edge programming to the Jewish and general communities of Los Angeles and beyond.”

Beginning his tenure on July 1, Dr. Herbst will be joined in Los Angeles by his wife, Sharon Polansky, PhD. Married for almost thirty years, they have three grown children; two sons, living in San Francisco and New York City, and a daughter who serves in the Israel Defense Forces.

For more information, contact Joanna Gerber, EdD, AJU Vice President of Marketing & Communications at jgerber@aju.edu, (310) 440-1529 or (805) 729-1823.

More information on American Jewish University can be found online at www.aju.edu.

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