**Women ponder positions of power**

By Hannah Monicken
Senior Writer

The women sitting around six tables were a little uncomfortable. Asked to imagine they were running for political office, they were composing 30-second elevator speeches for their candidacy. They gave caveats before it was their turn to speak and asked if they could sit instead of delivering the speech standing.

But by the second time they gave the speech, it was more polished — and closer to 30 seconds — and the women were more commanding. And that was the point, said Susannah Welford, president and founder of Running Start, a group that trains young women for political lives, who spoke at Temple Rodef Shalom in Falls Church on Sunday.

“There isn’t one piece of legislation that is going to fix” the lack of political power of women, she said. “There is one solution that can do more good than almost anything else — getting women into positions of power.”

Taking up space — physically, verbally and politically — is often difficult for women, who are socialized to do the opposite. But 2018 is poised to be a breakthrough year for women in politics. Since the 2016 election, since the #MeToo movement, since the women’s marches, women have been channeling their momentum into the campaign trail in unprecedented numbers.

In January, there were 390 women running for the House of Representatives, in unprecedented numbers. Their momentum into the campaign trail marches, women have been channeling the #MeToo movement, since the women’s politics. Since the 2016 election, since the women’s

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**Cardin’s opponents challenge status quo**

By Dan Schere
Political Reporter

A Potomac businessman who is running against the two-party system and a liberal Middle East peace activist from Silver Spring who is running against AIPAC are among the hopefuls looking to unseat two-term incumbent Sen. Ben Cardin (D-Md.) in the November elections.

Neal Simon and Jerome Segal, both Jewish, are two of the eight candidates challenging the Jewish senator, who filed for re-election earlier this month. The challengers to Cardin, an overwhelming favorite to win re-election, are pushing what they see as outside-the-box political agendas on both the foreign and domestic policy fronts.

Segal is one of five Democrats who are challenging Cardin, 74, for the party’s nomination in the June primary, which includes Richard Vaughn, Debbie Wilson, Lih Young and Chelsea Manning, the transgender activist who was sen-

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**Northern Virginia overtakes suburban Md.**

By Dan Schere
Political Writer

Northern Virginia has edged out the Maryland suburbs as having the largest population in a rapidly growing Greater Washington Jewish community, according to a demographic study released Sunday.

The study found the Jewish community, the third-largest in the country, has grown 37 percent in the 15 years since the last survey in 2003. Of the 295,500 Jewish residents of Greater Washington, 41 percent live in Northern Virginia, 39 percent live in the Maryland suburbs, and 19 percent live in the District of Columbia.

The Maryland suburbs have long been the center of gravity for the Jewish community. And while Northern Virginia’s rapid growth is no secret, its overtaking of the Maryland suburbs in population was among the biggest surprises of the study.

"I think that has to be one of the biggest stories overall," said Gil Press, CEO of the Jewish Federation of Greater Washington, which executed the study. "I mean, 120,000 Jews in Northern Virginia. That is more than most metropolitan [Jewish] commu-

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**Sizable Jewish community growth**

**Population**

37% Population Growth in the Last 15 Years

- 295,500 Jewish individuals
- 155,200 Jewish households (at least one Jewish adult in the household)

Total of 375,500 Jewish and non-Jewish individuals in Jewish households

According to data gathered as part of a landmark community demographic study funded by the Morningstar Foundation, almost 300,000 more Jews live here than 15 years ago.

Steinhardt Social Research Institute Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies

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See **CARDIN**, page 17
The study describes a community that is young, diverse and overwhelmingly Democratic, more so than the national average. And despite the perception of Washington as a region of transients, 94 percent of area Jews say the Washington area is their home base.

The community is less classically affiliated, with fewer Jews belonging to synagogues and other Jewish organizations — what Preuss and other Jewish community professionals call “engaged.”

“If people feel this is their home, how do we help them engage in the community with which they live?” Preuss said. “People may feel that Washington is their home, but the degree to which the Jewish community is their home is still a question.”

The 2017 Greater Washington Jewish Community Demographic Study was conducted by Brandeis University’s Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies and funded by The Morningstar Foundation established by Susie and Michael Gelman. (Susie and Michael Gelman are members of the ownership group of Mid-Atlantic Media, which publishes Washington Jewish Week.)

The study was based on a representative sample of more than 6,600 Jewish households in the area, said Janet Krasner Aronson, associate director of the Cohen Center. Researchers randomly selected these households from a series of lists provided by community organizations and others with “distinctive Jewish names.” To determine the overall population, Aronson said, researchers extrapolated data from hundreds of surveys about religion that Brandeis researchers had already conducted nationally.

The sample size used in the Washington study is reportedly the largest of any Jewish community study in North America.

### Greater Washington Jewish Community Population Estimates, 2017

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<td>Total households</td>
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</tbody>
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| Jewish Households      |           |                   |                   |          |
| number                 | 34,600    | 56,900            | 63,700            | 155,200  |
| percent                | 22        | 37                | 41                | 100      |

| Jewish individuals     |           |                   |                   |          |
| number                 | 57,300    | 116,700           | 121,500           | 295,500  |
| percent                | 19        | 39                | 41                | 100      |
Aronson said she thinks the Northern Virginia Jewish population was underestimated in the 2003 study.

"Since the Jews of Northern Virginia are generally less engaged with the community, they can be harder to include in surveys of the Jewish community," she said. "Our new methods do a much better job than past surveys in reaching less engaged community members, so we are able to estimate their numbers more accurately."

Aronson was one of four Brandeis researchers who worked on the study, and they all presented the data Sunday night at an event held at the Federation's headquarters in Rockville.

Leonard Saxe, a co-author of the report, said they conducted the study in the wake of a 2013 report from the Pew Research Center that found that Jews have become increasingly disengaged from their community. The goal of the study, he said, is to "expand your way of thinking about the community."

"I’m hoping that for some of you, that data breaks some stereotypes," he said. "Not all Israelis are the same. Not all intermarried families are the same. The diversity of where people fall out when you look at what they actually do and when they engage is extraordinary."

Aronson told attendees on Sunday that although many Jews do not attend synagogue regularly or even belong to one, many are still involved in the community through various means such as keeping kosher, observing holidays or volunteering with community organizations.

"No denomination does not mean no Judaism," she said.

The study’s findings will help guide the Federation’s future allocations and outreach efforts, Preuss said. Other conversations in coming days will introduce other stakeholders to the study’s results.

"On one hand, this is incredibly positive news; on the other hand, it also says we have a lot of work ahead of us," Preuss said.

The study found that 7 percent of Washington’s Jewish population identifies as LGBT. Another 7 percent are Jews of color.

When it comes to Israel, two-thirds of area Jews have been or lived there. Israelis make up 4 percent of the area Jewish population, Saxe said. "The assumption was that most Jews live in Maryland," he said. "As we start to think about the Federation budget for next year, as we start to think about allocations for next year, we have to think about how we increase investment for Northern Virginia."

This sudden focus on Northern Virginia was exhilarating to some at the Sunday meeting from Northern Virginia. Rabbi Evan Ravski of Congregation Olam Tikvah in Fairfax thrust his fists into the air at the news.

"It speaks strongly for the richness and breadth of Jewish life in Northern Virginia," he said later. "We’re there, and there’s a lot of us."

Dan Finkel, head of Gesher Day School in Fairfax, said the news came as a surprise. "The assumption was that most Jews live in Maryland," he said. "I’ve heard the jokes about having to take a passport to Virginia. I hope the study brings more focus to the people in Northern Virginia."

While Northern Virginia’s rapid growth is no secret, its overtaking the Maryland suburbs in population was among the biggest surprises of the study.