



Jewish Community  
Relations Council  
**MILWAUKEE**  
JEWISH FEDERATION

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**Reggie Jackson and Fran Kaplan to receive 2018  
Robert H. Friebert Social Justice Award**  
*Special posthumous recognition of Debbie Carter Berkson*

MILWAUKEE, Wisconsin – Reggie Jackson and Dr. Fran Kaplan have been selected to receive the 2018 Robert H. Friebert Social Justice Award. The award was established in 2014 by the Jewish Community Relations Council of the Milwaukee Jewish Federation. Previous honorees are attorney James H. Hall, Danae Davis, and Jose Olivieri.

Jackson and Kaplan were chosen to recognize their educational and community building work in pursuit of racial justice. In his nomination letter, Dr. Robert Smith wrote, “Not only are these two warriors for justice central to raising and shaping discourses about social justice and racial equality across Milwaukee communities, they both are important community stakeholders to many of the city’s educational institutions.”

Through the work of America’s Black Holocaust Museum and other endeavors, they have worked to raise consciousness about the legacy of slavery, race and racism in our city and country. An educator, Jackson joined the museum as griot (oral historian), had a long tenure as board chair, and continues to serve as Head Griot. In addition to her lifetime of social justice work, Kaplan has worked full time with the community group that formed the Dr. James Cameron Legacy Foundation. She has been particularly involved in developing the Foundation’s online museum, its public education programs, and interracial dialogues.

Among their collaborative volunteer work on ABHM’s behalf, Reggie and Fran have created numerous in-depth, multiple-session programs exploring African American history as an integral part of U.S. history and culture. They designed and led their interactive series in ways that successfully attracted and engaged multigenerational, multiracial audiences using short presentations, documentary and narrative films, and interracial dialogues facilitated by community leaders they trained. Reggie and Fran

were also instrumental in researching, contributing to, and presenting the award-winning 3rd edition of Dr. James Cameron's memoir, "A Time of Terror: A Survivor's Story."

Last year, the pair formed Nurturing Diversity Partners, a firm devoted to educating diverse audiences, including predominantly white suburban, exurban, small town and rural populations in Wisconsin and beyond.

"We are so pleased to honor Reggie and Fran for their individual and collective contributions to the movement for racial justice," said JCRC Chair Ann Jacobs. "The committee was particularly moved by their partnership, which is in itself a powerful example, a model for building bridges for our common good."

This year's award will also include a special recognition of Debbie Carter Berkson, of blessed memory, who died this February. A social worker, she engaged in many volunteer activities, serving Congregation Emanu-El Bne Jeshurun, Tikkun Ha-Ir of Milwaukee, the Cathedral Center, the Grand Avenue Club, and more. She was a tireless advocate for the voiceless. In her nomination letter, she was described as "a woman of boundless compassion and kindness, with a tireless commitment to making the world a better place for everyone."

The award will be given at the [JCRC's Annual Meeting](#) on Thursday, June 21. Click [here](#) for more information and to register for the event.

Robert H. Friebert (1938-2013) dedicated himself to the pursuit of social justice and the Jewish value of *tikkun olam* (repairing the world). A graduate of the University of Wisconsin Law School, Friebert was a founding partner of the law firm [Friebert, Finerty and St. John S.C.](#) He argued four cases in the United States Supreme Court and served as the first public defender for the State of Wisconsin from 1966-1968. Friebert was also extremely active in local, state and national Democratic politics in his pursuit of social justice. In addition to his legal and political work, Friebert held significant leadership roles in numerous organizations, boards and commissions. For more on Friebert and the award, click [here](#).

#### ***About the Jewish Community Relations Council***

*Founded in 1938, the Jewish Community Relations Council, a program of the Milwaukee Jewish Federation, advocates for the rights and values of Jews individually and collectively, here and abroad. The Council implements a coordinated program of education, action, and advocacy for the Jewish community. For more than one hundred years, the Milwaukee Jewish Federation has been dedicated to building a strong Jewish community. The agency distributed \$18.5 million last year to Jewish and non-Jewish organizations locally and around the world.*

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