Good Morning!

My name is Seth Arbital and I am the President of Temple Beth Ahm’s Men’s Club.   I am very happy to welcome all of you to this important program, “Unpacking Antisemitism: How American Jews Can Confront Antisemites.”   I would like to thank all the Local Men’s Clubs and Organizations that cosponsored and worked together to bring you this event. Our Clubs include:  Temple Beth Ahm of Aberdeen, Marlboro Jewish Center of Marlboro,  Temple Shalom of Aberdeen, Congregation Sons of Israel of Manalapan, and Rodeph Torah of Freehold.

Originally we were looking forward to welcoming you in person at Temple Beth Ahm. Unfortunately, we had to adjust and reschedule due to the pandemic. The recent rise in Antisemitic attacks in America has shocked and confused American Jews, and others in our interfaith community.  Covid-19 has become yet another outlet for antisemitism.  The more I hear about and witness incidents, the more determined I become to find an appropriate way to take action

Last Spring, as I watched my sister Rodi Franco’s master’s capstone video, I got a new understanding of the roots of antisemitism, and how both the Far Right and the Far Left  are unified in their hatred of Jews, and use similar tropes when demonizing Jews.   I was compelled to bring her as a speaker to our community, so she could share her research with us, and help empower our joint Jewish community to counter the antisemitic messaging.  During today's presentation, Rodi will present the antisemitism messaging, the philosophy of white nationalists, and the difference between criticism of Israel and anti-Zionist ideology.  She will then give us recommendations on how to confront antisemitism.

Rodi is currently retired and completed her second masters, a Masters of Liberal Arts from Rice University last Spring. She is currently pursuing a post-master’s interdisciplinary degree at Rice University, researching the enactment of laws and policies that limit human rights

Prior to retirement Rodi enjoyed a 35-year career in marketing, which included leading the marketing teams for the Houston Symphony, the Alley Theatre, the Houston Grand Opera and working for NYC ad agencies.  She was the Chief Marketing Officer for the Jewish Federation of Greater Houston during the first two of three catastrophic floods that severely impacted Houston’s Jewish community. Rodi earned her MBA from the University of Houston, and her BA from Sarah Lawrence College.

Rodi now serves on boards and committees for some of her favorite nonprofits, including the National Council of Jewish Women and Progressive Forum Houston. She is also an active member of Congregation Beth Yeshurun of Houston.

Today’s presentation is based on Rodi’s initial capstone presentation and additional research she has done since then. She has given this presentation to a variety of audiences, both in person and virtually.

We will be muting all participants during this presentation. Please submit questions in the Chat Area of the Zoom session.  At the end of Rodi’s presentation, I will pick several at random for Rodi to address.

It is with great pride that I introduce to you our guest speaker, my sister Rodi Franco.

present