

My Pink-Colored Kippah – Olga Lara, Director of Judaic Studies, Beth Yeshurun Day School

Hi my name is Olga Lara. I am so happy to be the Director of Judaic Studies at Beth Yeshurun Day School.

A little bit about me. I was born and raised in New Braunfels, Texas. I am the 4th of 5 children and the first person in my family to go to college. I graduated from Princeton University in 1981 with a degree in Sociology and a Secondary School teaching credential. I attended Stanford University School of Education as a Ph.D. candidate. I co-founded a Professional Sports and Entertainment Marketing company over 20 years ago and was the Vice President of Operations. Our clients included, the Houston Texans, Houston Dynamo, Houston Astros, the Oprah Winfrey Show, and many other professional sports teams and entertainment outlets across the country.

Twelve and one-half years ago, I bought my pink-colored kippah with its matching tallit. The occasion for the purchase was my conversion to Judaism (immersing in the ritual bath/mikvah at United Orthodox Synagogue and holding the Torah for the very first time before the open Ark) and one month later, becoming an adult bat mitzvah.

My pink-colored kippah is my daily reminder of the commitment I made to Hashem/God and the Jewish people. My kippah and my tallit are among my most prized possessions. I have told my son that the only possession I would like him to keep when I am gone is my pink-colored kippah and tallit.

The past 4 years I have been studying at the Jewish Theological Seminary, the east-coast educational center for the Conservative Movement. I have been a proud member of Beth Yeshurun Congregation for the past 10 years serving on the Board of Trustees and the Executive Board as a Vice-President. I believe in the tenets of Conservative Judaism: honoring and keeping Shabbat, observing kashrut, maintaining the mitzvot (commandments), and particularly, the words of the V'ahavta: "to love Adonai you God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might. And these words, which I command you this day, you shall take to heart, and **teach them, diligently to your children...**"

I thank you for the opportunity to teach these words to your children.

Shabbat shalom, Olga