

Rachel Brandenburg

Rachel ('92) was one of the first students at JPDS-NC. She lovingly recalls Jimmy's snack store, Purim Ball, the school newspaper started by Susan Koss, and her first science fair project where she remembers building "a whole assortment of bridges." Rachel and her family remain close to JPDS-NC.

Rachel continued in Jewish day school for middle and high school, where she played sports, and wrote for the student paper 'The Lion's Tale'. Following graduation, Rachel attended Tufts University where she obtained a B.A in International Relations and Middle Eastern Studies. While at Tufts, Rachel traveled around the Middle East with the support of the Tufts Institute for Global Leadership.

After graduation, Rachel traveled to Brussels as an American Jewish Committee Goldman Fellow. Upon her return to DC, she worked with the Brookings Institution Saban Center for Middle East Policy and Search for Common Ground before traveling to Israel as a Fulbright Scholar. A year later she again returned to DC to complete a Masters of Science in Foreign Service from Georgetown University. Following graduation she worked at the U.S. Institute of Peace and at the State Department, where she focused on conflicts across the Middle East and North Africa. Rachel currently works at the Pentagon where she focuses on Iraq and the global coalition to counter-ISIL. She speaks Hebrew, Arabic, and some French. Rachel served on the JPDS-NC board. Today, Rachel hopes that JPDS-NC "continues to grow and succeed while maintaining the warmth, community, and support for its students."