NATE SILVER TO SPEAK AT CHICAGO’S SPERTUS INSTITUTE ON MAY 19
The statistician who gained worldwide recognition for the accuracy of his predictions during the 2008 and 2012 presidential elections will discuss the impact of the Jewish vote in American politics and the art and science of predicting the future.

He appears at Spertus Institute for Jewish Learning and Leadership as part of a series of impressive leaders who inspire new thinking on the critical issues of our times.

(Chicago) Nate Silver is a statistician and blogger who made his name by predicting the outcomes of political and cultural events—often with incredible results. The accuracy of his predictions in both the 2008 and 2012 presidential elections and a range of congressional and senatorial races won him followers, fans, and commendation.

Nate Silver will speak at Spertus Institute for Jewish Learning and Leadership on The Signal and the Noise: Why So Many Predictions Fail—But Some Don’t, which is also the title of his new book, a New York Times best seller that was named by Amazon.com as one of the best books of 2012. The program takes place on Sunday, May 19 at 1 pm.

Mr. Silver’s appearance is part of the Spertus Prime speaker series, an impressive line-up of individuals whose work inspires new thinking with real-world application. Past Spertus Prime speakers include Kenneth Feinberg, director of the September 11th Victims Compensation Fund, and award-winning novelist Jonathan Safran Foer. Elana Drell Szyfer, CEO of AHAVA North America, will speak at Spertus as part of the series on May 2.

Before coming to politics, Nate Silver established his credentials as an analyst of baseball statistics. In 2004, while still in his twenties, he developed a statistical method called PECOTA, which he later used to forecast Major League Baseball player performance. He is the author of several books on baseball statistics, including Mind Game and Baseball Between the Numbers, and has also written for ESPN.com, Sports Illustrated, and Slate magazine.

In 2007 Mr. Silver began publishing his statistical analyses on the political blog Daily Kos. In 2008 he created his own website, FiveThirtyEight.com, which was licensed for publication by The New York Times. Since then he has published his predictions on a variety of topics, including U.S. Congressional races, NCAA Basketball tournaments, and the Academy Awards. His website has garnered high praise from the blogging industry, winning Weblog’s Best Political Blog winner in 2008 when he correctly predicted the presidential result in 49 of the 50 states and in all 35 U.S. Senate races.

Named by Time magazine as one of “The World’s 100 Most Influential People,” Mr. Silver has also served as an economic consultant for KPMG in Chicago and as a managing partner for Baseball Prospectus. He has a BA in Economics from the University of Chicago.
Data-based predictions provide the foundation for a growing number of social practices, from political polling to stock market predictions. And the amount of statistical data in our society only continues to grow. Sometimes, it is hard to know which kinds of predictions can be trusted, and which ones fall short. That’s where Nate Silver is an expert. Through his bold statistical predictions—often in opposition to political pollsters—Mr. Silver is able to separate the signal from the noise, revealing in the process how mathematical analysis is becoming increasingly more vital in today’s world.

Mr. Silver will be introduced by Steve Edwards, longtime host of WBEZ’s news magazine Eight Forty-Eight. Mr. Edwards now serves as deputy programming director for the new Institute of Politics at the University of Chicago, working alongside political analyst David Axelrod, who serves as the new Institute’s inaugural director.

The Nate Silver program takes place at Spertus Institute, 610 S. Michigan Avenue. Discount parking is available for $10 with Spertus validation at the Essex Inn, two blocks south of Spertus.

Tickets are $50 and $35. A limited number of $15 student tickets are available. Student tickets are available by phone purchase only, and a valid student ID will be required at the door. All seats are reserved. Mr. Silver’s book will be for sale at this event and he will be signing books at a cocktail reception (cash bar) following the program. Tickets are on sale online at spertus.edu and by phone at 312.322.1773.

Spertus offers dynamic learning opportunities, rooted in Jewish wisdom and culture and open to all. Graduate programs and workshops train future leaders and engage individuals in exploration of Jewish life. Public programs—including films, speakers, seminars, and concerts—take place at the Institute's Michigan Avenue facility, in the Chicago suburbs, and online. For more information, please visit spertus.edu.

Nate Silver’s appearance at Spertus is made possible with support from the Harvey L. Miller Family Foundation and other generous donors.

Spertus Institute is a partner in serving the community, supported by the JUF/Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago.