SPERTUS INSTITUTE WELCOMES PROFESSIONAL STRATEGY EXPERT AND COMMUNITY LEADER ELLEN HATTENBACH TO ITS SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM

Hattenbach joins the Spertus Institute staff as Vice President for External Relations, a position created to foster opportunities for Jewish learning and advance initiatives that develop future community leaders.

(Chicago) Spertus Institute for Jewish Learning and Leadership is pleased to announce the appointment of ELLEN HATTENBACH to the newly created position of Vice President for External Relations.

In her new role at Spertus, Hattenbach will be working to advance both longstanding and new initiatives as the 91-year-old organization looks ahead to its second century expanding opportunities for Jewish learning, educating Jewish leaders, and helping secure a strong and enduring Jewish future.

Hattenbach comes to her new position on the Spertus staff with a leadership portfolio of corporate, association, and consulting expertise paired with extensive nonprofit board experience. Her professional background is rich in strategic planning and development, client relations, branding, community leadership, and project management. Prior positions include Director of Strategic Marketing for Frost, Ruttenberg & Rothblatt; National Director of Marketing at the American Bar Association; and Strategy Director in the Legal Services Group of PricewaterhouseCoopers, where she received the Chairman’s Award for Outstanding Community Service.

As a fundraiser and community leader, much of her work has focused on areas important to the Jewish community. She chaired the Jewish United Fund’s Division for Trades, Industries & Professions—as well other important JUF initiatives including Israel Solidarity Day, Stand-Up Chicago, the Hunger Awareness Project, and the 2014 Phonathon. Hattenbach serves as Vice-Chair for the Jewish Community Relations Council Domestic Affairs Commission. For seven years she served on the board of Deerfield High School’s Friends of the Arts. She is a graduate of the Certificate in Jewish Leadership program, which Spertus Institute presents in partnership with Northwestern University, and she recently served on the Spertus Institute Board of Trustees.

Hattenbach has long been an advocate for young professionals seeking to advance their careers, especially those working with organizations serving the greater good. In many ways, her role with Spertus will be an extension of this passion, particularly work she does for and with Spertus Institute’s new Center for Leadership. Launched in 2014, the Center offers programs that expand and strengthen the knowledge, effectiveness, and strategic agility of current and future Jewish leaders.
Spertus President and CEO Dr. Hal M. Lewis described the decision to hire Hattenbach in the context of the Spertus story at this particular point in time. “After working over the past years with our partners at the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago, our dedicated Board of Trustees, a fabulous team of staff and faculty, and generous donors to whom we are extremely grateful, Spertus Institute for Jewish Learning and Leadership has turned an important corner,” he explained.

“In the aftermath of the recession, we faced a precarious financial situation, but we sharpened our mission, balanced our budget, and renewed our commitment to building vibrant Jewish communities through Jewish learning and the training of Jewish leaders.

“As proud as we are of what we achieved,” he continued, “we know that many are still unaware of the transformative impact of our work. As a former student, Ellen Hattenbach knows this first-hand. She also knows and loves the Jewish community—and possesses the expertise to help strengthen our organization and further advance the work we do.”

In speaking about her new role, Hattenbach said, “Spertus has had a profound effect on my professional and spiritual development. Having been a Spertus student and Trustee, as well as a guest at compelling programs and beautifully orchestrated events, I can say with confidence that Spertus Institute is an exceptional organization. I have yet to find another that brings the same passion and skill to the important work of sharing Jewish wisdom and shaping Jewish leaders.”

With their two daughters, Kira and Mari, attending universities, Hattenbach and her husband Jonathan are moving to a new home in Skokie this summer. She begins work at Spertus Institute on August 3.

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About Spertus Institute for Jewish Learning and Leadership
Spertus Institute 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.

About Spertus Institute’s Center for Jewish Leadership
Rooted in the belief that great Jewish communities need great leaders, Spertus Institute’s Center for Jewish Leadership aims to transform Jewish life by cultivating innovative approaches to leadership and enhancing the abilities of Jewish communal professionals and volunteers. Programs offered through the CJL provide participants with a holistic approach to Jewish leadership that seamlessly integrates deeper understanding of Jewish life, culture, and history with insights and best practices from the worlds of business and nonprofit leadership.

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