

**NJHN BOARD OF DIRECTORS CANDIDATE STATEMENTS
FOR 2021-2022 ELECTION TERM
(in alphabetical order)**



Gary Brill has been an active member of the New Jersey Humanist Network since the mid-1990s and has served two separate terms as president of the NJHN. He is currently NJHN president, and in the past he co-founded both HumanLight in 2001 and the Humanist Community at Rutgers University in 2009. Gary received a Ph.D. in Personality and Social Psychology from New York University, worked in industry for 20 years and taught psychology at Rutgers University for 16 years. Gary's vision for the future of the NJHN is of a friendly, inclusive, effective organization that serves its members well and pursues opportunities for growth amidst technological change. He is married to Tamar Kieval Brill, another Board member of the NJHN.



Erica Cohn has been a member of NJHN since 2013, and has been on the Board for four years. She has very much enjoyed being a part of the New Jersey humanist community, and participating in the many events the organization holds. The most recent contributions she has made as a Board member were to help get NJHN merchandise from the planning stages to fruition as a member of the marketing committee, and chaired the bylaws committee as they have completed a long-awaited revision of the bylaws. Erica looks forward to the opportunity to continue to serve on the Board if re-elected.



Adriana Cordal is a recently retired psychiatrist after practicing mostly in NJ for over 30 years. Most of her career has been as an academic psychiatrist with clinical, administrative, research and teaching experience. She was born and raised in Uruguay by non-believer parents, in a country which has a large percentage of atheists and deep roots in skepticism. Coming to the U.S. after medical school, she had to adapt to a mostly religious culture and for years kept her lack of religious belief as a private matter. By the early 2000s Adriana felt it was time to reach out to people who had similar ideas about religion, skepticism, and our duty to contribute to society from a secular perspective. She joined the Red Bank Humanists in 2007 and has been participating in meetings and activities on and off since then. In recent years, after moving to Mercer County, she joined NJHN. Now that Adriana is retired she is ready to take on a more active role within this community. She will be happy to participate as a Board member and contribute to NJHN with a special interest in reaching out to younger people. She feels that we are at a special time in our country, when truth is being misunderstood and challenged, and that we need to provide a framework for younger people to find their home and the ground to understand how to go about finding truth and rejecting false claims. She looks forward to working on those goals.



Jasmine Farahat grew up in Brooklyn, NY and was exposed to different cultures and beliefs at an early age, and learned to view life from more than one perspective. While her mother raised her Roman Catholic and she even attended Catholic school, her father came from a Jewish family with a different set of beliefs. That dynamic caused her to express doubt that any of these particular beliefs were true. By observing how hypocritical some churchgoers were, she landed on the belief that religion was not necessary to be a good person.

Jasmine earned a B.A. in Psychology with a minor in Physical Anthropology from Rutgers University New Brunswick Campus. While there, she joined the student-run group Atheist Student Alliance to meet like-minded individuals. The group offered a community for non-theists that she wanted to continue to be a part of after she graduated. She was fortunate to have attended a presentation on Secular Humanism by Gary Brill of the Humanist Community at Rutgers and naturally transitioned into attending events with NJHN. She has served as the NJHN Secretary since joining the Board of Directors in 2017.

Jasmine lives in Ewing with her twelve cats. She greatly enjoys acrylic painting and has donated paintings for NJHN's silent auction that is held during the winter holiday party each year.



Thaine Shetter is a native of Kansas and has lived in New Jersey for 19 years, with stops in Chicago, St. Louis, western Montana, and New England in between. He currently lives in Pennington. He first worked in the newspaper industry on the marketing and management sides. More recently, he has been a writer and editor, primarily as a contractor with Educational Testing Service.

He was raised as a nominal Methodist, but it never particularly resonated. He started attending NJHN events several years back, and formally joined about two years ago.

Thaine is interested in serving on the Board in order to learn more about the workings of the group, provide some input on programs, and explore ways to expand our membership.



Joe Vincenzino has been an almost lifelong (since 8) secular person, and it has always been important to him that the secular view of life be heard in the world. He always called himself a humanist, for want of a better word, because he didn't know such a thing existed until his 40s. He feels that NJHN has made strong efforts in providing a place for secular people to meet and feel comfortable. It was one of the first groups he joined after moving to New Jersey. He found it the place to be to find friends, and a place to fit in.

Joe has been involved in the secular movement since 2011, as a member, organizer and officer of a number of groups, and has been a member of NJHN for over five years. He has strong communication skills, especially in understanding what it means to be secular, and a humanist. He spent most of his career as a software trainer, teaching both technical and non-technical people, having to make each understand from their point of view. He would like to help NJHN in its mission to provide a welcoming and comfortable place for life to be better and safer for secular people.

Joe is a gadget geek, and technically skilled. He can help with technical setup of live or virtual meetings, NJHN's social media, or whatever future technical needs arise. Semi-retired, he expects to have the time to dedicate to being a Board member.



Jennifer Vriens has made social justice her lifelong passion. She has worked in the field of fundraising since 1999 specializing in women's issues, including domestic violence, reproductive rights and women's economic empowerment. She currently serves as the Director of Development and Marketing at the YWCA Union County, Union County's domestic violence program. She is currently NJHN Vice President. Continuing her commitment to women's issues and philanthropy, Jennifer was the Founding President of the New Jersey Abortion Access Fund, New Jersey's first state-wide abortion fund, and currently serves on the Board of the Association of Fundraising Professionals - New Jersey Chapter.

She has a master's degree in Counseling, a bachelor's degree in Sociology from the University of Delaware, and maintains her Certified Fund Raising Executive certification.