

Igniter

Michelle J. Goldberg

Venture Capitalist,
Ignition Partners

"Being in venture capital and funding early-stage technology companies, you have to believe in change—change in the world, technological change, but also societal change and economic change. You have to be an optimist for change. All while still balancing the risk, and not necessarily pessimism, but realism. I like thinking about risk and opportunity. I like venture because it's not hands-off investing; it's hands-on, where you're really involved with the team and doing the best you can to give advice and be a mentor."

The granddaughter of a New England rabbi, Michelle J. Goldberg grew up in the town of Durham, New Hampshire, and earned a Bachelor's degree from Columbia University and a Master's degree from Harvard University, both in East Asian Studies. When her husband got a job at Microsoft in 1997, they relocated to Seattle, and Michelle shifted her focus to finance. She worked as an investment banker in mergers and acquisitions before joining the venture capital firm Ignition Partners in 2000. Since then, she has helped raise more than \$1 billion for Ignition's investment fund and more than \$100 million in financing for startup companies, focusing much of her attention on mentoring new executives with exciting ideas. She has also served on the boards of a variety of companies, including the public global asset management firm Legg Mason, and is an active fundraiser and adviser for several educational nonprofits.



Michelle with her husband and kids; in Switzerland with fellow Agent of Change, Ambassador Suzi LeVine; speaking at a technology forum.

Washington State
**JEWISH
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY**

50

1968 ▶ 2018

Washington State

**JEWISH
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY**