

JESNA in Action at the GA

As delegates descended on Atlanta this past November for the 1999 General Assembly of the United Jewish Communities, JESNA Board members were convening to review recent achievements and to plan future JESNA initiatives. Twelve new members were elected to the Board – the largest number of new members JESNA has ever welcomed at one time!

A highlight of the Board meeting was the transfer of the mantle of leadership (in this case a *tallit*, recalling an ancient Jewish tradition) from outgoing President **Mark Lainer** to newly elected President **Joe Kanfer** from Akron, OH. The Akron delegation to the GA later hosted the Board, staff and friends of JESNA for a dessert reception in honor of Kanfer.

“The inclusion of Jewish renaissance as a primary component of UJC’s vision is an affirmation of JESNA’s priorities”

But JESNA’s presence at the GA went far beyond the board meetings. The UJC used the occasion to unveil its four mission-driven pillars, Campaign/Financial Resource Development, Human Services and Social Policy, Israel and Overseas, and Renaissance and Renewal. For JESNA, the inclusion of Jewish renaissance as a primary component of UJC’s vision represents an affirmation of JESNA’s own priorities for Jewish communal life and positions UJC as a strong ally for JESNA in its efforts to promote “vibrant Jewish life through Jewish learning.”

The potential of this new partnership was graphically illustrated in the Renaissance pillar programming at the GA, jointly planned and staffed by JESNA and UJC. The Renaissance Forum, moderated by JESNA’s Executive Vice President **Jonathan Woocher** and chaired by **Shoshana S. Cardin**, former President of CJF, engaged a group of “star” panelists in a lively dialogue addressing the scope, directions, and challenges of Jewish renaissance for federations and for the Jewish community as a whole. The session was among the best attended at the GA.

To further explore the far-reaching implications of Jewish renaissance, seven “elaboration sessions,” many of which were chaired by JESNA Board members, addressed specific components of the Renaissance agenda. Sessions focused on: Adult Education (chaired by **Mark Lainer**), Day Schools (chaired by **Bennett Yanowitz**), Jewish Youth (chaired by **Joe Kanfer**), College Campuses (chaired by **Helene Berger**), New Partnerships to Strengthen Synagogue and Community Life (chaired by **Sandra Brown**), Congregational and

Jon Woocher Surprised by Special Covenant Award

One of the annual GA highlights is the splendid Covenant Awards Champagne Reception and Gala Luncheon, honoring Jewish educators nominated by their peers. This year’s Covenant Award winners were three outstanding educators: **Rabbi Judith Abrams** of Houston, **Cheryl Finkel** of Atlanta, and **Macy Hart** of Jackson, MS. To no-one’s surprise, the affair was a classy tribute. Someone was surprised, though, to find himself the recipient of a Special Award from the Covenant Foundation. JESNA Executive Vice-President **Dr. Jonathan Woocher** was surprised - and delighted - to win a Special Award recognizing his tremendous efforts and achievements in Jewish education. Susan Crown of the Covenant Foundation presented the award.



Jon Woocher accepts a Special Award from Susan Crown



The Changing of the Guard: Jon Woocher, Mark Lainer and Joe Kanfer

Supplementary School Education (chaired by **Billie Gold**) and Jewish Culture (chaired by **Lynn Korda Kroll**). The prominent role assigned to JESNA at the Pillar Elaboration Sessions points clearly to the widespread recognition in the federation system of JESNA’s leading role in the Renaissance and Renewal enterprise.

In another GA highlight, JESNA leaders joined members of the Association of Directors of Central Agencies for Jewish Education for dinner and a special panel discussion on the “*tachlis*” of Jewish renaissance at the local level. Again moderated by **Dr. Jonathan Woocher**, this panel featured **Dr. Alisa Rubin Kurshan**, Director of the Commission on Jewish Identity and Renewal, UJA-Federation of NY, **Barry Shrage**, President, Combined Jewish Philanthropies, and **Dr. Danny Margolis**, Executive Director, Boston Bureau of Jewish Education. The dinner culminated in a tribute by ADCA to retiring Miami Central Agency Executive **Gene Greenzweig** for his outstanding contribution to Jewish education and a tribute by JESNA to outgoing President **Mark Lainer** for his three years of stellar leadership. (See “JESNA on the Road” insert for photos.)

For JESNA, “GA Week” is always one of the busiest of the year. But, this year, as so often in the past, it was also a week of accomplishment and gratification for JESNA and its leadership.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Joe Kanfer

With gratitude and enthusiasm, I embrace the presidency of JESNA. And, with a Jewish sense of moment, I'm keenly aware that this presidency begins at an especially opportune time for Jewish education and for JESNA.

We are living through a seminal time in Jewish life.

I say that because, first, we Jews are participating in a period of explosive growth and commitment to the redeeming power of

Jewish education. Second, because we at JESNA stand at the vanguard to lead that revival.

JESNA, now, is positioned to lead as never before. Building on years of visionary zeal and foundation building, JESNA is now actualized and recognized as a dynamic resource, owing to the following elements:

- Focused vision
- Broad reach serving the totality of Jewish education
- Historic commitment to helping others achieve their aspirations
- Effective partnering skills
- Distinctive, inspired Board members
- Agile and innovative staff led by an extraordinary leader, Jon Woocher

Our path is clear and our forward-motion is set. We must strive to:

- Expand participation at all levels, especially in the most effective programs and settings
- Engage more leaders
- Multiply financial support for Jewish education through broader and deeper sources
- Recruit, retain, and reward larger numbers of first-rate Jewish educators
- Maintain quality programs through research, evaluation, and dissemination

Now is the time for us to capitalize on the fortitude and perseverance of JESNA's pioneers. They struggled for two decades to keep the redeeming power of Jewish education alive in the face of our larger

community's disinterest or even worse, its lip service.

As your new president, I feel gratitude to JESNA's founders and leadership for providing the courage, skills and steadfast dedication which have positioned JESNA to fulfill its destined role. A special thank you to Mark Lainer for continuing this tradition of foresight, achievement and leadership in thought and deed.

Let us all commit to making the next chapter of JESNA a memorable leap forward in fulfilling our purpose: vibrant Jewish life through Jewish learning.

Mark Lainer: "Big Shoes to Fill"

When asked to say a few words about Mark Lainer, friends and colleagues describe a warm, engaging, energetic man whose strong commitment to the Jewish community in general, and to Jewish education in particular, have enabled him to make a discernible difference in the causes he champions. And then they just keep talking – about his love of family and his enthusiasm for glass-collecting, his non-pushy yet proactive approach, his tremendous generosity, his determination to further the goals he holds dear, his team-leading and diplomacy skills, and more.

Taking over the JESNA presidency three years ago, Lainer assumed the leadership of an organization poised for growth. Three years later, in the words of JESNA Associate Executive Vice-President, Saul Andron, "He leaves a much stronger agency than the one he inherited." An enormous amount has been achieved, both in terms of the scope and quality of JESNA's programs and initiatives, and in terms of the atmosphere of energy and vitality that fills the agency.

A highlight of Lainer's presidency is the inauguration of JESNA's Campaign for Jewish Learning and Living. As befits his history of both leadership and generosity, Lainer and his family made one of the initial major gifts to the Campaign, a \$1 million commitment to support the "Lainer Interns for Jewish Education" program. JESNA's successful pioneering initiative to recruit college students for careers in Jewish education. Not surprisingly, Lainer's commitment to JESNA and the Campaign is not abating even as he leaves the presidency; he has accepted the position of General Chair as the Campaign for Jewish Learning and Living moves into its public phase.



A Tough Act to Follow: Joe Kanfer congratulates Mark Lainer on his term as president

Today's JESNA is a creative, vibrant agency that boasts a range of programs focusing on the key cutting-edge areas that Lainer was particularly eager to develop as president, including educator recruitment and media and technology. A big "Yashar Koach" to our outgoing president for providing the strong leadership that has kept JESNA thriving over the past three years. In the words of new President Joe Kanfer, "Mark's will be big shoes to fill."

About Joseph S. Kanfer

Joe Kanfer's extensive leadership experience is sure to serve him well in his new role at JESNA. President of GOJO Industries in Akron, Ohio, Kanfer is also admired for his important work within the Jewish community. He has served as President of the Jewish Community Federation (1988-90) and the Hillel Academy (1980-83), and is a founder of the Akron Jewish Community Campus Project. Kanfer currently serves on the Council of Trustees of the American Friends of Hebrew University and on the Board of Trustees of the United Jewish Communities. He has also served on the committees of various schools, synagogues and campus boards in Akron. Kanfer continues to play an active role as trustee in the Ohio-Israel Chamber of Commerce, Akron Regional Development Board, as member of Akron Tomorrow, and as part of the Capitol Leadership Circle of the Government Affairs Committee of Ohio Jewish Communities.

JESNA Board, staff and friends are proud to welcome Joe on board!

Day School Folder Impresses GA Delegates

In an unprecedented display of commitment and concern for Jewish Day School Education, a central piece of the literature in each 1999 General Assembly delegate kit was an impressive, hot-off-the-press folder of information praising the benefits of day school education and identifying the financial challenges and opportunities that face its proponents today.

A project of United Jewish Communities, JESNA, the Ari Chai Foundation and the Partnership for Excellence in Jewish Education, the folder contains three documents that attest to the new prominence of day school education on the communal and philanthropic agendas. The first, an excerpt from the UJC-JESNA Task Force on Jewish Day School Viability and Vitality, includes a summary and recommendations concerning the funding, affordability and long-term viability of day school education. (The Task Force was chaired by JESNA past President, Bennett Yanowitz.)

The second piece in the Day School folder is **The Jewish Investment Portfolio**, published by the Ari Chai Foundation. The document tells the story of contemporary day schools through interviews with graduates, faculty and funders. It also outlines further funding possibilities.

Finally, the Day School folder contains a pamphlet entitled **Partnership in Action**, which highlights the work of the Partnership for Excellence in Jewish Education, a consortium of funders who are helping new day schools take root in communities across the continent.

Taken together, the three documents make a powerful statement about the increasing importance of quality Jewish education and day school education in particular. If you did not attend the GA and are interested in receiving the literature from the packet, please contact Honey Rose at (212) 234-6895 or honey@jesna.org.

The New Language of Renaissance and Renewal

What is "Jewish renaissance?"

"Jewish renaissance" refers to the myriad of efforts underway today to create a rich Jewish life for growing numbers of Jews in the contemporary world. On the individual level, the vision of Jewish renaissance is that of "more Jews doing Jewish with other Jews." (Richard Joel). On the communal level, the vision is that of a community of *Torah*, *Tzedek* and *Hesed* (Barry Shrage), or in other language, a community characterized by lifelong Jewish learning, mutual caring and social responsibility and multifarious expressions of spirituality and cultural creativity. The Jewish renaissance began more than a decade ago and expanded early in the 1990's under the banner of "Jewish continuity," "Renaissance and Renewal," a pillar of UJC and a fundamental component of JESNA's vision for Jewish education, represents a bolder, more content-rich articulation of vision for Jewish life.

What role has JESNA played in this movement?

Throughout its existence, JESNA has been at the forefront of the federated system's efforts. In the 1990's,

JESNA served as the "lead agency" of the federated system in this area. In this capacity, JESNA has:

- Assisted dozens of local communities in planning, implementing and assessing their continuity/renaissance initiatives;
- Provided globally recognized visionary, intellectual and strategic leadership for the continuity/renaissance endeavor;
- Helped to organize, convene and program conferences and consultations on a wide range of themes relating to Jewish renaissance, including programming at every General Assembly since 1992;
- Published four "Continuity Handbooks" to provide concrete guidance and examples of "best practice" in the areas of:
 - community-wide planning for Jewish education,
 - family education

- synagogue-federation-agency collaboration and
- program evaluation;
- Served as the national clearinghouse for information on and descriptions of community continuity/renaissance initiatives and programs;
- Supported dozens of innovative educational and cultural projects through the Covenant Foundation; and
- Developed effective new programs and initiatives of its own in a wide range of key areas, including: youth education, media and technology, educator recruitment and development, and the promotion of Jewish peoplehood. Today, JESNA is working on a dozen exciting projects in these and other areas with financial support from Board members, national and local foundations.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Dr. Jonathan Woocher

The new millennium is here, and the American Jewish community is approaching it with a cautious optimism far different than the somewhat panicked desperation about the future so prevalent earlier in this decade. The optimism springs from a sense that the underlying dynamics of American Jewish life today offer greater opportunities for Jewish renewal — a "Jewish renaissance" in the current parlance — than we imagined when first confronted by the apparently grim statistics of the 1990 National Jewish Population Survey.

But creating a Jewish renaissance requires more than optimism. Over the last few years, as initial efforts to realize this vision have gathered momentum, some lessons regarding what it takes to revitalize Jewish life have also become evident. Here is how I would summarize the "state of the art" of Jewish renaissance today:

First, the vision itself. Jewish renaissance is not a "program." It is a holistic, integrative vision of Jewish life and activity built around core values variously expressed as *Torah*, *Tzedek*, and *Hesed* (Barry Shrage), or *Torah*, *Avodah*, and *Gemilut Hasadim* (Pirkei Avot), or God, Torah, and Israel. Jewish renaissance is about reconstituting a Jewish community that finds its purpose and inspiration not in external threats (whether in the form of anti-Semitism or assimilation), but in the eternal drive to be a community that

embodies Jewish values in everything that it does, a community of caring and responsibility, lifelong learning, and spiritual vitality. The interpretation and expression of these values will inevitably and healthfully take a variety of forms. But, Jewish renaissance allows us to be unified at the level of purpose, even if we remain plural in some of the ways that we pursue that purpose.

Second, the pathway to the vision. Here, Jewish renaissance, like *the Renaissance*, looks in two directions: It looks back to the past with a new appreciation of, respect for, and desire to appropriate the core values and achievements of classical civilization, in this case classical Jewish civilization. The drive to expand dramatically Jewish literacy — our ability knowledgeably and thoughtfully to access the riches of the Jewish past: our texts, our history, our values, the rhythms of Jewish life — is central to Jewish renaissance. In the classic Talmudic debate as to which takes precedence, study or action, the consensus of the rabbis falls on study — because it leads to action. In truth, our experience teaches us that it can work both ways. But, even those whose personal Jewish renaissance has begun with Jewish activism have come increasingly to understand that to sustain the *Jewish* character of their commitment to doing, they must go "back to the sources." Quality Jewish education is the most powerful and effective force shaping a life of Jewish involvement and meaning. Without Jewish knowledge and understanding, even a sincere desire for Jewish self-expression will lack the voice and vocabulary to go beyond inarticulate stammers.

But, Jewish renaissance is not only about renewing Jewish learning. It is also about

energizing Jewish living. And to do this, again like the Renaissance of six centuries ago, it must look outward and forward. We have an opportunity today to engage all of the areas of our human talent — our intellectual, artistic, economic, moral, socio-political, and spiritual capacities — in shaping a Jewish culture that will be uniquely modern, and yet still Jewishly rooted. Jewish sources must be linked with, integrated into, and at times confront, challenge, and be challenged by the full range of problems, achievements, aspirations, and forms of expression that comprise contemporary culture. We cannot know what a "renaissance Jewish community" will look like in the 21st century, and we dare not try to foreclose possibilities even before they have been explored.

Third, the practical implications: We will need a complex Jewish educational strategy to fuel the renewal of Jewish life. First, we must take advantage of and maximize participation in what we know to be the formative and transformative experiences that form the pathway to lifelong Jewish commitment. There is little mystery as to what these experiences are, even if there is much work to be done and money to be spent to make them as universal as possible: growing up in a home where Jewishness is part of the fabric of family life; formal Jewish learning throughout one's youth in a day school or a congregational or communal school with a serious culture of support for Jewish education; participation in a vibrant youth group, movement, and programs as an adolescent; time spent in Israel; continuing formal and informal Jewish learning and activity on a college campus with a vigorous campus Jewish community; ongoing study,

reading, and Jewish conversation throughout one's life. There is a Jewish educational path that "works," and the more people we can get to walk this path, the more expansive and vibrant our Jewish renaissance will be.

But ... Many Jews will *not* find their way onto this path at the outset, or will diverge from it at some point in their lives. Today's Jewish journeys, we know, tend to be circuitous and idiosyncratic, full of surprising twists and turns. We need Jewish education that is, in the words of the old Delta Airlines slogan, "ready when you are." We need to add access points, to be agile and accessible, to ensure that Jews coming from whatever place with whatever concerns and expectations find an entry onto what we hope will be their Jewish pathway. This may mean Jewish learning opportunities offered in unusual places and unusual times with unusual teachers. It means utilizing technology to bridge time and space. It means personalized education. It means continuous innovation, experimentation, and evaluation to extend the reach of Torah farther and farther into the lives Jews live.

For JESNA, whose purpose is "vibrant Jewish life through Jewish learning," Jewish renaissance is quite simply what we're all about. We welcome the chance to work with partners old and new, communal and philanthropic, to forge the strategies, implement the tactics, and nurture the people that will make this Jewish renaissance happen. The potential for a Jewish renaissance in the 21st century is real. It has already begun. Our job is to bring this promise to fruition, to (in the words of Rav Kook) "renew the old, and sanctify the new."

Power To The (Young) People...

To what extent can we trust Jewish teens to accept the responsibility of functioning independently in the Jewish community and in Jewish life?

If the examples of fine leadership skills demonstrated by Jewish teens in general society are anything to go by, Jewish teens are a reliable and resourceful group whose talents we should be seeking to channel into responsibilities within the Jewish community. Significant numbers of Jewish teens serve as editors of their high school newspapers, participate in high school student government and give thousands of hours of service to their communities. A Jewish teen from West Hartford succeeded in having youth representatives named to the State Commission on Education. Another from New Jersey created a community-wide anti-smoking campaign for youth.

“Jewish teens are a resourceful group whose talents we should be seeking to channel into the Jewish community”

So why isn't more of this talent and energy directed to Jewish pursuits? The most likely answer is that, until now, Jewish teens have not been offered the appropriate roles and responsibilities within the Jewish community. Currently, however, there are several projects in various stages of development which seek to change this pattern.

The Jewish Civics Initiative, sponsored by the Washington Institute for Jewish Leadership and Values, now operates in 18 communities. Developed and piloted with JESNA's assistance, the program includes a community service component that asks *students* to assess community needs and to implement a project that will make a difference in people's lives. In San Francisco, teens participating in a teen version of the Wexner Heritage Program are learning the skills needed to motivate and mobilize other Jewish youth. In MetroWest, NJ and Minneapolis, a pilot project is beginning to train eleventh-grade students recruited from youth groups, Jewish high schools, Israel programs and JCC youth programs to reach out and engage uninvolved Jewish youth.

To change the experience many teens have in the Jewish community, however, new programs are not enough. The key to effective youth programming is ensuring that the professionals who work with teens, in both formal and informal settings,

understand and can practice teen empowerment. In both Boston and MetroWest, NJ, synagogues and community agencies are partnering to prepare and employ full-time youth professionals capable of working with Jewish teens with this objective in mind.

Perhaps the biggest challenge of all is to acknowledge that Jewish teens need to create Jewish meaning for themselves in their own way. Synagogues, agencies and communities must recognize that not every Jewish teen belongs in a formal Jewish high school program or youth group. We need to create *new* ways of allowing each young person to find a personal connection to some aspect of Jewish life and to the Jewish community. Jewish youth arts festivals, literary and video competitions, exhibitions, social action projects, web sites and other activities that emulate the huge success of events like the JCC Maccabi youth games must become a regular feature of Jewish community life. Community service, now becoming a high school graduation requirement in a growing number of states, offers manifold opportunities to direct the energies of Jewish teens back into the Jewish community, while also providing a living context for teaching Jewish values. And, of course, Israel experiences remain a prime vehicle for helping Jewish teens explore their Jewishness in an exciting, energizing environment. Here too, one of the key requisites is developing more programs that are custom-tailored to the diverse backgrounds and interests of today's Jewish youth.

“The key to effective youth programming is ensuring that the professionals who work with teens can practice teen empowerment”

As local communities work to determine and respond to the needs and desires of their teen populations, JESNA continues to work alongside them as a partner and a source of new ideas, model programs, and evaluation assistance. The teens we strive to engage today are tomorrow's Jewish community. They deserve the very best we can provide.

For more information on youth initiatives at JESNA, please contact Rabbi Art Vernon, Director of Educational Development at (212) 284-6897 or art@jesna.org.

A Whole New World: A Jewish Educator's Guide to the Internet

In the past, a Jewish teacher's greatest challenge might have been unpacking a difficult section of Talmud or resolving a dispute between Rashi and Tosefot. Today, though, a significant challenge to educators is keeping up with students as they journey at break-neck speed through the World Wide Web. There, Talmud, Rashi, and Tosefot can be found alongside thousands of other Jewish resources and educational sites. There is no doubt about it - the Internet can be a daunting place to many of today's Jewish educators, who feel they need not only to catch up with their students, but to catch on to the Internet as a viable educational tool.

In response, JESNA has developed a seven-week online workshop, in association with the Jewish Theological Seminary (JTS). Entitled *A Jewish Educator's Guide to the Internet*, the workshop is designed to narrow the gap between students' mastery of the Web and their educators' ability to confidently exploit it as an invaluable resource for lesson planning and for classroom use. Offered twice a year, the course is moderated by Caren Levine, Director of Media and Technology at JESNA, and Michael Starr, Director of Distance Learning at JTS.

One of the workshop's goals is to help educators understand the potential of the Internet for enhancing Jewish education by teaching them a variety of technical and critical skills through a guided exploration of the Internet and the World Wide Web. Gail Dorph, Senior Education Officer at the Mandel Foundation, registered for the course after noting "how indispensable the Internet has become."

Open to a maximum of 25 students each semester, the course generates "virtual" discussion through a web-based bulletin board and "real-time" chats with scholars-in-residence. Students take the course at their own pace, for their own professional development. Each week, unit course materials become available to participants online. Each unit revolves around a particular theme, such as Jewish education resources on the Web or evaluation criteria for websites. During the first week of the course, students are invited to introduce themselves to other course participants through the Bulletin Board in the "Getting To Know You" area. This is the beginning of the group's development of an online identity. For many students, it is the first encounter with a virtual community.

A powerful advantage of online learning is that it allows students the convenience of logging on at any time of day or night. There is one caveat, however: self-motivation is a necessity for students who find themselves facing the calm of a computer rather than the wrath of a teacher! The lack of "face-to-face" contact between participants and

instructors leads both to depend on the regular posting of messages to the Bulletin Board and to the 'chat' room.

The workshop calls for a minimum commitment of two hours a week and the creation of a final project. Nancy Messinger, Director of the Department of Educational Resources at the Auerbach Central Agency for Jewish Education, Philadelphia, developed a WebQuest online curriculum for educators from her community who were looking to incorporate the movie of "The Prince of Egypt" into their curriculum. Other projects researched have included Shabbat, Jewish holidays, Jewish text and others.

One of the remarkable qualities of online, or distance, learning is the seemingly effortless ability with which it bridges the barriers of distance and time. The two live "chats" held during last November's workshop united students from cities as far apart as Johannesburg and Jerusalem for one hour of "virtual" time together!



Caren Levine with Blanche Sosland, Chair of JESNA's Technology Committee

And what of students' reactions to this unique form of Jewish education? Well, some were originally more reluctant to embrace the challenges of online learning than others. Blanche Sosland, professor at a small liberal arts college in Missouri and chair of JESNA's Technology Committee, was one such skeptic, but now seems convinced: "This course has added a whole new dimension to teaching for me. As an educator who has had limited experience on the Internet, I have now caught up with my students, and together we can explore this wonderful educational resource. I have been implementing material from this course in my own teacher preparation courses since the first week online!"

Sosland's husband Neil can certainly vouch for his wife's new-found enthusiasm for the use of the Internet in education. A few weeks ago, she rarely glanced at the computer. Now, seven weeks - and one online workshop - later, he has trouble keeping her offline!

For more information on how to take part in next semester's workshop, beginning February 7, please contact Caren Levine, Director of Media and Technology at (212) 284-6898 or caren@jesna.org.

Who Wants to Be Evaluated?

JESNA's Berman Center Demonstrates the Value of Evaluation

When Joseph Berman took over as President of the Alexander Muss High School in Israel, he faced a challenge: He needed to demonstrate the longitudinal success of his program with more than just anecdotal evidence. And so, he turned to JESNA for assistance. The **Mandell L. Berman Jewish Heritage Center for Research and Evaluation** helped AMHSI gather statistical information that conclusively showed the program's long-term impact on several generations of participants and success in meeting its mission. The data has helped AMHSI verify the quality of the Jewish identity experience and academic program it provides for potential participants, parents, and funders alike.

Sound research and evaluation are powerful tools that afford organizations the opportunity to improve programs and that often lend credibility in the eyes of questioning funders. Janice Alper, Executive Director of the Jewish Educational Services of Greater Atlanta, credits the evaluation her agency underwent in 1998 with helping them obtain a larger federation allocation. "The research and evaluation [conducted by the Berman Center] helped us and our local federation understand our work better... We have seen an increase in staff and professional development as a result and most importantly, the federation now advocates on our behalf."

For many organizations in the Jewish community - both independent and communal - JESNA's Berman Center is the address they turn to for information gathering and assessment. "I approached JESNA because I knew from my years as a lay leader in federation that JESNA was the only independent entity which could perform this type of a study with an understanding of community, education and qualitative Israel experience," says Berman of the study AMHSI commissioned five years ago. "They showed us the dimples and the pimples - our successes and our failures." As a result, AMHSI is now going about business in a more effective, strategic way.

"Sound research and evaluation are powerful tools that lend credibility in the eyes of questioning funders"

Created in 1992, the Mandell L. Berman Jewish Heritage Center for Research and Evaluation is one of JESNA's flagship endeavors. A longtime JESNA Board member and Honorary Chair, Berman established the Center out of a commitment to provide the Jewish educational world with state-of-the-art research and evaluation services. The Center specializes in several fields: conducting evaluation and impact studies of educational programs, research and analysis for Jewish renaissance planning,



Bill Berman with Leora Isaacs

and descriptive data collection about schools, central agencies and other educational programs and institutions (including enrollment, personnel, and funding). The Berman Center also maintains a database of research in Jewish education, publishes research digests, handbooks and reports, and serves as the secretariat for the Network for Research in Jewish Education.

Berman Center Director Dr. Leora W. Isaacs highlights the prime reason for the Center's success. "Jewish leaders want more than just the Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval on their projects. The research and evaluation we conduct sparks programmatic and organizational changes that set the stage for continuing improvement." Of course, it's always gratifying to a client to learn that a program is working well, as was the case with the Muss High School. However, notes Berman, one of the best outcomes of the evaluation was the recognition that "there's a lot we still don't know." In fact, he is considering engaging JESNA's services for a follow-up evaluation sometime in the near future.

The growth of the Berman Center since its inception testifies both to the growing "evaluation consciousness" in the Jewish community and to the quality of the research that the Center conducts. Each year, the number of the Center's studies for and consultations with federations, boards of Jewish Education, foundations, and independent organizations has increased. Isaacs reports that the Center conducts approximately ten full research and evaluation projects per year, and helps many more institutions - including Covenant Foundation grantees - through guidance on how to set up their own evaluation processes. Indeed, empowering and instructing others in how to design and conduct evaluations is now a major element in the Berman Center's work. "As much as we like being appreciated for the research we do," says Isaacs, "we feel we make an even greater contribution when we can help a community make evaluation part of their way of doing business when JESNA is not on the scene."

For more information, please contact Dr. Leora Isaacs, Director of Research and Evaluation at (212) 284-6899 or leora@jesna.org.

Don't Give Up on Hebrew School Just Yet!

Recent years have seen exciting growth in Jewish day school education. Nonetheless, the "part-time" Jewish school, variously known as "supplementary school," "Talmud Torah," or "Hebrew school," remains the primary means of educating a majority of today's Jewish children. Few people are happy with the overall quality and effectiveness of part-time Jewish schooling. But growing numbers of educators and community leaders believe that mediocrity (or worse) is *not* inevitable. Sound policies, investment in personnel, stronger institutional and communal support, and ongoing experimentation and evaluation of new contents and methods can make supplementary education a success story in the 21st century.

This is the premise that guided JESNA when it convened a task force on Congregational and Communal Jewish Education in the Fall of 1998. Led by **Helene Berger**, JESNA Vice President and a past president of the Central Agency for Jewish Education in Miami, the Task Force has been identifying exemplary programmatic models, successful methodologies, and new approaches for developing cooperation between the wide variety of institutions that work to educate our Jewish children.

"Mediocrity, or worse, is not inevitable... New methods can make supplementary education a success story"

With over thirty members consisting of leaders from across the continent and representing central agencies, the religious movements, and professional educator organizations, as well as the JESNA Board, the Task Force examined virtually every aspect of the part-time Jewish educational system. Four specific but overlapping areas emerged as guiding themes for special attention. These were:

- Recruitment, Training and Status of Teachers and Educational Leaders
- Building a Collaborative Infrastructure for Support
- Program, Content and Structure - Organization of the Educational Process
- Advocacy, Funding and Resource Development

The Task Force reached several key conclusions:

In the area of **Recruitment, Training and Status of the Teachers and Educational Leaders**, examined by a working group chaired by Dr. Steven Baruch of Milwaukee, the Task Force focused on the importance of establishing a system of supports that

will redefine the role and status of the educator. Included in such a system would be formal induction and mentoring programs, as well as continuing professional development activities for both teachers and administrators.

"The message is clear: 'Hebrew school' is far from a lost cause"

The group on **Building a Collaborative Infrastructure for Support**, with Rabbi Phil Warmflash of Philadelphia as Chair, developed a blueprint for fully integrating the school, often left to its own devices and necessarily limited resources, into the life and activities of both the synagogue as a whole and the broader Jewish community.

The **Program, Content and Structure - Organization of the Educational Process** group, chaired by Rabbi Amy Small of Chatham, New Jersey, emphasized the importance of each school developing a clearly stated vision that can in turn be connected to a set of criteria for successful educational programs. By starting with a vision of what they wish to achieve and agreeing on measures of success, schools can continually reshape their educational activities to realize the vision they have developed.

The group on **Advocacy, Funding and Resource Development**, under the guidance of JESNA Board member Gail Weinstein of Hartford, addressed directly the need to reverse the self-fulfilling prophecy of negativity that currently characterizes the attitudes of many leaders toward part-time Jewish education. Low expectations lead to meager financial support, which ensures that improvement efforts will be crippled from the outset. The only way to break this cycle is to recognize all that *can* be done and to provide the resources to catalyze meaningful change.

Over the next few months, these conclusions will be woven into several broad strategies and many detailed action recommendations for schools, synagogues, communities, and JESNA itself that will be incorporated into the Task Force's final report. Already though, the message is clear: "Hebrew school" is far from a lost cause. If we have the will, there are myriad ways that we can make congregational and communal part-time schools exemplars of the excellence that JESNA seeks for every form of Jewish education.

For more information on the Task Force report, please contact Paul Flexner, Ed. D., Director of Human Resources Development at (212) 284-6879 or flex@jesna.org.

The Campaign for Jewish Learning JESNA Board Reaches Milestone of \$6 Million

As we go to press, JESNA has raised more than \$6 million from Board members and other close friends and supporters. This is a milestone for the agency, setting a strong pace for JESNA as the agency heads into the Public Phase of the *Campaign for Jewish Learning and Living*. According to Billie Gold, Coordinating Chair for the *Campaign*, “the Board has shown exemplary dedication in providing the financial resources that will allow JESNA to achieve its vision of **leading the communal commitment and mobilization for excellence in Jewish education.**”

“Through the exceptional generosity of members of the Board, we have already raised more than 25 percent of the *Campaign’s* \$25 million goal,” said JESNA Past President Mark Lainer, who has assumed the position of General Chair of the Public Phase of the *Campaign*. As it reaches out to other Jewish foundations and community philanthropists, JESNA is determined to build on the extraordinary example set by its Board. “Jewish education in North America is at a unique, historic moment of opportunity,” stated Lainer. “We seek to forge creative partnerships with individuals and foundations who are committed, as we are, to seizing this opportunity to make Jewish education the best it has ever been.”

- apply the best of Jewish media and technology to help educators and learners and
- facilitate the identification and sharing of best practices in a wide range of educational settings, including day school and congregational education.

Thus far, the *JESNA Campaign* has received major gifts of \$500,000 to \$1.5 million each from Mandell (Bill) Berman, the Lainer Family, the Lippman/Kanfer family, the Harold Grinspoon Foundation and the Crown Family Foundation. According to Gold, “These gifts have enabled JESNA to move to an entirely new level of activism in promoting positive change in Jewish



Jon Woocher, center, with JESNA Past Presidents (left to right) Bill Berman, Bennett Yanowitz, Neil Greenbaum, Billie Gold, Mark Lainer and current President Joe Kanfer

The monies raised through the *Campaign* are being used to fund JESNA’s ambitious plan for achieving excellence in Jewish education, the agency’s *Initiative for Jewish Learning and Living*. The *Initiative* is an array of creative and innovative programs, projects and partnerships designed to propel Jewish education into the next century at a new level of quality and impact. Programs launched as part of the *Initiative*

- expand JESNA’s professional recruitment and training activities,
- provide enhanced educational opportunities for Jewish adolescents,

education. These leadership commitments set the tone for what will be a breakthrough campaign for JESNA and a boon for Jewish education throughout North America.”

The Public Phase of the *Campaign for Jewish Learning and Living* began in January 2000. Individuals interested in more information about the *Campaign* and giving opportunities may contact Saul Andron, Associate Executive Vice President at (212) 284-6886 or saul@jesna.org.

Supporting the Campaign

If you are considering making a meaningful gift to help improve and enhance the state of Jewish education in North America, invest in JESNA. Gifts to the Campaign for Jewish Learning and Living help donors express personal desires and interests in Jewish education and, at the same time, help maximize their gift potential. JESNA is seeking endowment and designated support for specific programs as well as grants for unrestricted program support. Some ways to give are highlighted below:

• Outright Gifts

Outright gifts may be used immediately to make a dramatic impact on major areas of need for JESNA. Many such gifts bear the name of the generous donor or the names of those the donor wishes to honor.

• Endowed Gifts

The principal of the donor’s gift is left intact while the generated interest provides permanent support of a JESNA program. Such a gift perpetuates the donor’s support of JESNA. As with outright gifts, endowment funds and the programs they support may carry the name of the donor or someone the donor wishes to honor.

• Securities

By contributing appreciated securities, such as stocks or bonds held for more than one year that are now worth more than their purchase price, a donor can make a gift whose value exceeds its original cost. Such a gift allows the donor to deduct the full market value of the securities and avoid paying capital gains tax on the appreciation.

• Real Estate

Residences, vacation homes or commercial property may be a valuable source of support for JESNA, especially if the property is easily marketable. The donor is not liable for capital gains tax on the appreciated value of the property.

• Bequests

Through a gift from one’s estate, an individual extends his or her philanthropic life. A bequest may be designed for any specific amount, a percentage of one’s estate or the residual of an estate.

• Assignment of Trust Fund Income

As a trust beneficiary, some donors receive regular, stable income from a trust and income tax must be paid on that entire amount. If a portion of the annual income assigned to this charity is distributed to a special fund established at JESNA, the donor pays no tax at all on his portion of the income. In addition, the donor may receive a substantial deduction at the time of the assignment.

• Life Income Gifts

Charitable Remainder Unitrust - a donor provides assets to JESNA while retaining the income derived from trust.

Charitable Remainder Annuity Trust - a donor receives income from the trust for a lifetime or set number of years; this provides the donor with substantial income and estate tax savings. The remainder interest supports the unrestricted endowment fund or a specific program of the donor’s choice.

Charitable Lead Trust - a donor contributes part of his/her estate to the trust now and the income goes to the JESNA unrestricted fund (or any other type of fund) for a designated period of time. The donor’s estate taxes are reduced, and when the trust terminates, the assets go to their benefit.

Pooled Income Fund- modest gifts of cash or securities are added to the gifts of others. In turn the donor receives a proportionate, variable share of the income of the fund and tax benefits. At the end of the lifetime of all designated beneficiaries, the gift passes to JESNA.

• **Life Insurance** - allows a donor to name JESNA as owner and beneficiary of a paid-up policy entitling the donor to a tax deduction equal to the cost basis of the policy or its replacement cost, whichever is less.

If you or someone you know is contemplating a gift to JESNA and you would like to obtain additional information, please contact Associate Vice-President Saul Andron at (212) 284-6886 or saul@jesna.org.

New Initiatives at JESNA: Profiles of Three New Gifts and their Dollars at Work

The Lippman-Kanfer Center for Institutional Renewal

JESNA has received a generous \$1 million commitment from the **Lippman-Kanfer** family of Akron, Ohio, to establish the new *Lippman-Kanfer Center for Institutional Renewal*. This major gift allows JESNA to break creative new ground in linking theory to practice and giving thought and attention to creating change in Jewish educational and communal life. The Center's first initiative is the *Jewish Identity Action Project* which convenes groups of researchers, communal and educational professionals, volunteer leaders and funders to examine the implications of new Jewish identity research for educational policy and practice. In July 1999, the *Jewish Identity Action Project* convened an invitational conference dealing with this theme, hosted by the Cohen Center for Modern Jewish studies at Brandeis University. The gathering was co-sponsored by JESNA, the Cohen Center, the Melton Centre for Jewish Education in the Diaspora (of the Hebrew University) and the Wilstein Institute of Jewish Policy Studies. In October 1999, the *Lippman-Kanfer Center* also sponsored a **Roundtable Conference on Community-Based Synagogue Change Initiatives**. This gathering provided the first opportunity for professionals working with synagogue change initiatives to present and compare their models, to discuss critical issues, and to create an informal network for sharing and disseminating information in the future. Through the *Lippman-Kanfer Center*, JESNA continues to support these professionals by serving as a clearinghouse of information for the community-based projects and by hosting an online discussion list to encourage and facilitate ongoing information exchange.

NEWS BYTE

JESNA and Hillel to Establish Joint Career Recruitment Initiative

Initial planning is underway to create a North American version of JESNA's highly successful Lainer Interns for Jewish Education on North American campuses. Discussions are currently underway with Hillel campus leadership and central agency executive directors to identify the first campus communities that will pilot the initial program in Fall 2000. As we go to press, funding is pending from several sources.

The Harold Grinspoon Awards for Excellence in Jewish Education

The **Harold Grinspoon Foundation** has made a significant commitment of \$625,000 over the next five years to inaugurate the *Harold Grinspoon Awards for Excellence in Jewish Education*, a new, national teacher awards program. Up to fifty teachers a year (one per community) will be selected by local BJE's or Federations for the *Grinspoon Awards*, recognizing excellence in Jewish teaching, career commitment to the field, and outstanding contributions. A portion of each award will be made as an unrestricted gift, with the remainder to be used by the recipient for professional development. A major goal of the Awards program is to recognize the efforts of grassroots educators and to acknowledge individual teachers as keys to success in Jewish education. A second objective is to encourage communities and other philanthropists to join Grinspoon and his wife **Diane Troderman**, a longstanding JESNA Board member and Vice President, in their effort to honor teachers and assist in their professional growth. JESNA is serving as the operating agent for the implementation of the *Grinspoon Awards Program*, with the first public announcement of winners scheduled to take place in September 2000.



Taking the Initiative: Harold Grinspoon and Joe Kanfer



A Commitment to Excellence: Susan Crown of the Crown Family

NEWS BYTE

Jewish Community Day School Network Opens National Office

In December, the Jewish Community Day School Network (JCDSN) opened its national office at the United Jewish Federation of Tidewater in Virginia Beach, VA, with **Ada Michaels** as Executive Director. The Network is an association of Jewish community day schools in the United States and Canada, whose membership has doubled to 65 member schools over the last three years.

Crown Family Campus Recruitment Initiative

For over a decade the **Crown Family** of Chicago has worked in partnership with JESNA to promote excellence in Jewish education. Through their involvement with the **Covenant Foundation**, which they founded with JESNA ten years ago, they have helped launch and support dozens of innovative programs in areas including teacher training, outreach, special education and use of media and technology.

The **Crown Family** has now made an additional \$500,000 commitment to the *Campaign for Jewish Learning and Living*. This generous gift allows JESNA to partner with **Hillel: The Foundation for Jewish Campus Life**, in an initiative to encourage talented students to pursue careers in Jewish education. *Campus Recruitment Initiative* activities will include coordinating recruitment efforts at college employment fairs and other campus-based venues for Jewish education graduate programs and entry-level positions in the field. The Initiative will also pilot a Jewish Educators Corps program that will work intensively with undergraduate students teaching part-time in supplementary schools or serving as youth advisors.

Todah Rabah to all these generous JESNA supporters.

NEWS BYTE

JESNA Friends Campaign Reaches New Heights

They said it could never be done... Thanks, however, to the vision and perseverance of JESNA Board members **Richard Spiegel** and **Jack Meyers**, the *JESNA Friends Campaign*, a key funding source for the expanded program operations of the agency, achieved a record total of \$105,000 in 1999!

Richard Spiegel spearheaded a special *Friends Campaign* outreach initiative which brought in close to \$12,000 from 67 first-time givers. He hopes that other Board members will help him top these impressive figures in 2000, by becoming even more active in reaching out to friends and colleagues. Thanks for all your hard work, Dick and Jack!



Mark Lainer acknowledges Dick Spiegel's efforts as Friends Campaign Outreach Chair

Jon Woocher delivered the Keynote address at the **Broward County, FL Education 2000 Summit**. Sponsored by the **Broward County Central Agency for Jewish Education**, the address dealt with setting an agenda for local action in areas such as youth, professional development and congregational education.

The annual **Jewish Family Education Conference** sponsored by the **Auerbach Central Agency for Jewish Education** in **Philadelphia, PA**, hosted **Leora Isaacs** as one of its keynote panelists. Leora also presented several workshops at the conference.

Art Vernon presented a session on *Engaging Jewish Teens* during a seminar for lay and professional leadership working with youth in **Western Massachusetts**. Funded by the **Grinspoon Foundation**, the seminar promoted collaboration among youth program leaders and addressed the issue of raising professional standards in informal youth education.

Caren Levine and **David Resnick** represented JESNA at the **International Jewish Education (JET) Conference** in **Be'er Sheva, Israel**. The conference was co-sponsored by JESNA and convened producers, funders, end-users, and distributors.



A Job Well Done: JESNA's Caren Levine and Conference Director Meir Fachler at the First International Jewish Education Technology Conference, of which JESNA was a co-sponsor and coordinator

While in **Israel**, **Caren Levine**, **Rabbi Marty Schloss** and **Sara Seligson** of the Board of Jewish Education of Greater New York met with the educational coordinator of Microsoft, Israel in **Herzliya Pituach**. They also conducted site visits to the **Amal Pedagogical Technological Center** in **Tel Aviv** and to the **ALYN Pediatric Hospital and Rehabilitation Center for Physically Handicapped Children** in **Jerusalem** to share and exchange resources.

Jon Woocher delivered a talk to the **Board of the American Friends of Tel Aviv University** in **New York**. The talk focused on the changing climate of fundraising in North America.

As part of an ongoing consultation for the **Teen Retention Grant Project** in **Los Angeles, CA**, **Leora Isaacs** worked with professionals and congregations there to develop an evaluation process. Chaired by **Mark Lainer**, the project aims to empower synagogues and schools to retain their youth in Jewish activities post Bar/Bat Mitzvah, and is co-sponsored by the **Los Angeles Federation** and the **BJE**.

Art Vernon met with federation and day school leadership in **Ocean County, NJ** to assist in developing a strategy for marketing day schools to the community. As a follow-up to the initial meeting, JESNA is helping the community to develop a marketing survey and is connecting them with other communities and organizations with an interest in day school education.

Leora Isaacs conducted a seminar for rabbinical students at the **Jewish Theological Seminary** on strategic planning for Jewish Family Education. The seminar focused on ways to use Jewish Family Education as a lever for enhancing the congregational 'system.'

Jon Woocher presented a talk on the **Jewish Renaissance Agenda** to the **Commission on Jewish Education** in **Hartford, CT**.

Art Vernon participated in the first session of the **Peer Networking Project** in **MetroWest, NJ**. The project is designed to train eleventh grade high school students to connect their peers with Jewish youth activities.

As part of an ongoing JESNA project in partnership with the **Phoenix Jewish Federation** and the **Western Region of United Jewish Communities**, **Jon Woocher** conducted a workshop for day school and community leadership in **Phoenix, AZ** to build support for Jewish Day Schools.

Paul Flexner and **Rachel Brumberg** represented JESNA at the **Schusterman Hillel International Professional Staff Conference** in **Princeton, NJ**.

Jon Woocher spoke to a gathering of Jewish communal leadership in **Worcester, MA** on the importance of Jewish Day School Education. The event was sponsored by the **Solomon Schechter Day School**.

Caren Levine presented a workshop, "Using Internet as a Jewish Educational Resource: Educating Ourselves; Educating Our Communities" at the third international scholarly exchange, **Studying Jewish Women**, sponsored by the **Hadassah Research Institute on Jewish Women** at **Brandeis University**. Participants included women from **Australia, Croatia, England, France, Former Soviet Union, Germany, Israel, Italy, Russia, Turkey, Uruguay** and the **United States**.

Jon Woocher delivered a presentation entitled "Accessibility, Affordability and Participation in Jewish Life" to the **Center for Policy Options**, held at the **University of Judaism** in **Los Angeles, CA**.

Jon Woocher offered two days of presentations to various leadership and professional groups in **Detroit, MI**.

Paul Flexner coordinated the **Seventh Annual Winter Seminar for 29 Lainer Israel Interns**. Held in **Malibu, CA**, the interns spent three days in intensive seminars and discussion on graduate schools and career options in Jewish education.

Leora Isaacs created and presented a workshop entitled "Spheres of Influence" for recipients of the **UJA-Federation of NY** continuity grants. The workshop helped professionals explore interpersonal relationships, analyze power and information in the workplace and contextualize how their grant programs fit into the organizational system of their host agency.

Caren Levine presented a series of workshops at a **Judaic Technology Conference and Vendor Fair** co-sponsored by JESNA in association with the **Board of Jewish Education of Greater New York, Associated Talmud Torahs of Chicago-Goldman Computer Department and Touro College**. The conference was held at **NY's Touro College** and catered to the needs and interests of day school teachers and principals with a range of beginner and advanced level programs.

Jon Woocher gave a major presentation at the **Jewish Education "Summit Meeting"** of the **Union of American Hebrew Congregations** in **Los Angeles, CA**. Organized in conjunction with **HUC-JIR** and **NATE**, the talk focused on strategies for Jewish Education in the 21st century and was attended by JESNA Board members **Barbara Shuman, Larry Sherman** and **Esther Saritsky**.

Art Vernon conducted a focus group with prospective students for a Jewish Community High School in **El Paso, TX**.

Leora Isaacs spoke to the **Foundation Advisory Council of the Jewish Community Federation of San Francisco, the Peninsula, Marin and Sonoma Counties**. She presented an overview of how funders can use evaluation to improve practice.



Lainer Israel Interns gather at the Seventh Annual Winter Seminar in Malibu, CA

EVENT	DATE	LOCATION	CONTACT	SPONSORS
Jewish Educators' Guide to the Internet: An Online Workshop	February 7-March 24, 2000	Online	Caren Levine, JESNA (212) 284-6898 caren@jesna.org	JESNA, JTS
Jewish Community Day School Network	March 5-8, 2000	Birmingham, Alabama	Lynn Raviv, (205) 879-1068 fax: (205) 879-6183 lynnr@nemjds.org	RAVSAK
Gender Issues in Adult Jewish Education: A National Conversation	March 12-13, 2000	Brandeis University, Waltham MA	Benita Ross c/o Helene Greenberg (781) 736-2064 HRJW@brandeis.edu	Alliance for Adult Jewish Learning, Hadassah Research Institute for Jewish Women, Jewish Community Center Association
NATE (National Association of Temple Educators) Cleveland Kallah	March 24-26, 2000	Cleveland Wyndham Hotel	Rabbi Stan Schickler, Executive Director (212) 452-6510	NATE
Fourth NAA Conference On Informal Jewish & Zionist Education	March 26-29, 2000	Nevele Grande Hotel, Ellenville, NY	Heather Kibel, (732) 494-1023 fax: (732) 906-9371 hpkibel@earthlink.net	NAA (North American Alliance for Jewish Youth), Jewish Agency for Israel
Jewish Funders Network	April 2-4, 2000	NY	Jeremy Burton, (212) 726-0177 jeremy@jfunders.org	Jewish Funders Network
JESNA Board Meetings, NY	June 4-5, 2000	NY	Saul Andron, JESNA (212) 284-6886 saul@jesna.org	JESNA
Annual Meeting of the Network for Research in Jewish Education	June 4-6, 2000	NY	Leora Isaacs, JESNA (212) 284-6899 leora@jesna.org	Network for Research in Jewish Education
Whizin Institute on Jewish Family Education Conference	June 25-29, 2000	University of Judaism, LA	Lisa Singer, (310) 440-1279 lisauj@aol.com	Whizin Institute at the University of Judaism
NATE (National Association of Temple Educators) Israel Seminar 2000	June 26-July 9, 2000	Israel	Rabbi Stan Schickler, Executive Director (212) 452-6510	NATE
CAJE 25 (Conference on Alternative in Jewish Education)	August 13-17, 2000	Hempstead, NY	Eliot Spack, CAJE, (212) 268-4210	CAJE
International Congress on Informal Jewish Education	Sept 4-14, 2000	Royal Hotel at Dead Sea, Israel	Rotem Ayalon, fax (972) 2 621-6230 kennes@jazo.org.il	Jewish Agency Department of Education

Scenes from the GA



Gil Graff, Executive Director of the Los Angeles BJE, joins Billie Gold to acknowledge Mark Lainer's outstanding service as president



Jon Woocher looks on as Mark Lainer thanks JESNA Board member Neil Greenbaum for his legal guidance

NEWS BYTE

ADCA Receives Grant to Establish National Diffusion Network

The Jim Joseph Foundation recently awarded a planning grant to the Association of Directors of Central Agencies (ADCA) to establish a National Diffusion Network for Supplementary Jewish Education. In partnership with the departments of education of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, the United Synagogue for Conservative Judaism, the

Jewish Reconstructionist Federation, and JESNA, the ADCA will initiate a planning process to implement a national diffusion process for innovative projects that are designed to significantly improve the quality of Jewish education being provided on a part-time basis by congregational and communal schools in North America.

NEWS BYTE

JESNA Task Force Explores Personnel Issue

The shortage of high quality Jewish educators continues to challenge the Jewish community in North America. JESNA created the Task Force on Professional Recruitment, Development, Retention and Placement in order to examine the underlying causes of this chronic shortage and to recommend new strategies for promoting the profession. Under the able leadership of Dr. Sandra Gold of Englewood, NJ, the Task Force is actively involved in learning about the current status of the Jewish educator through its evaluation of the latest in new initiatives currently being piloted in communities throughout North America. A full report with recommendations is planned for the conclusion of the Task Force's work, most likely in the Spring of 2001.



Helene Berger, President of Miami BJE, presents outgoing BJE Director Gene Greenzweig with an award for outstanding achievement



A Fond Farewell: Jon Woocher with Lenore Gladstone, who retired in December after 23 years at JESNA

Goodbye to Lenore Gladstone,

Assistant to the Director of Human Resources, who retired this past December after 23 years of dedicated service to JESNA. At the luncheon held in her honor, JESNA colleagues admired the great charm, poise and professionalism that Lenore brought to her work and spoke of the delight of working with such a special lady. Our loss is one man's gain, though — Bob Cahn is the lucky man whom Lenore married this past June, and with whom she now retires to Berkeley Heights, New Jersey! Thank you and good luck, Lenore.

Goodbye to Karen Gadarian,

Research Associate, who also left JESNA in December. Karen's hard work and professionalism will be greatly missed around the office, as will her gregarious personality and lively laugh! Thank you and good luck, Karen.

Welcome to Rachel Brumberg,

who joined JESNA as Human Resources Development Associate this past December. She succeeds Lenore as administrator of the Visiting Teachers Program, and will also be working with Paul Flexner within professional recruitment. Originally a participant in JESNA's pilot Graduate Seminar for Careers in Jewish Education, Rachel has a BA in Religion from Trinity College, Connecticut, and an MA in Religious Studies from Boston University.

Welcome to our twelve new

Board members: Eli Almo, Seattle, WA; Helene Kalsouh Cohen, Ed.D., Detroit, MI; Lynda Giles, Ph.D., Detroit, MI; Amy Kaufman Goott, Washington, DC; Gail Meyers, Miami, FL; Sherman Minkoff, M.D., Phoenix, AZ; Karen L. Morris, Wilmington, DE; Nancy Rubin, Atlantic & Cape Counties, NJ; Jerry Siegel, Atlanta, GA; David Steirman, San Francisco, CA; Donald A. Sylvan, Ph.D., Columbus, OH; Jerry Weiner, Fort Worth, TX.

We look forward to working with you all!

JESNA was created in 1981 as the Jewish Federation system's educational coordinating, planning, and development agency. JESNA is widely recognized for its leadership in the areas of research and program evaluation, professional recruitment and development, media and technology, organizational change and innovative program design and dissemination.

OUR PURPOSE: Vibrant Jewish Life through Jewish Learning

OUR VISION: Leading the Communal Commitment and Mobilization for Excellence in Jewish Education

JESNA is a national, non-profit agency governed by a board of directors comprised of lay and professional leaders in Jewish education from across North America, including individuals from the major Jewish religious movements. JESNA is a beneficiary of Jewish federations throughout North America and other private and communal funders.

Jewish Education Service of North America, Inc.

111 Eighth Avenue, 11th floor
New York, NY 10011-5201
212 234-6950
212 234-6951 Fax
info@jesna.org
www.jesna.org

Design: Linda Florio Design

Jewish Education Service of North America, Inc.

111 Eighth Avenue
11th Floor
New York, NY
10011-5201



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