

JESNA Board Ratifies New Strategic Plan

June Meeting Sets JESNA on Course To Expand Impact

The JESNA Board of Directors unanimously ratified a new Strategic Plan for the agency at its most recent meeting in New York. More than 40 Board members participated in the discussions and approved the plan entitled, "Building Jewish Education and JESNA for the 21st Century."

In ratifying the Strategic Plan, the Board charged JESNA with fulfilling an expansive vision and ambitious agenda for seeking "consistent excellence in Jewish education." The Plan calls on JESNA to focus on three

main areas in expanding its programs and services: 1) human resource development, including educator recruitment, training, recognition, and retention; 2) knowledge management, providing vital information and know-how to guide educational policy and practice; and 3) educational improvement and organizational change, helping institutions and educators improve their performance and deliver higher quality education.



Bill Berman, Helene Berger and Arthur Brody.

In his presentation of the Strategic Plan to the Board for their input and approval, JESNA Board Chair Joe Kanfer reflected on JESNA's history of working in harmony with individuals and organizations across the spectrum of Jewish life in North America. "This Plan is not about making JESNA a bigger agency; it is about making Jewish education better," he remarked.

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In addition to discussing and ratifying the Strategic Plan, the Board approved JESNA's 2002-03 budget and participated in sessions that examined a wide range of educational issues with which the agency is engaged. In a follow-up session to the discussion of the Strategic

Launch of Sosland Online Jewish Education Resource Centers Announced at June Meeting



Sosland Online Jewish Education Resource Centers launch reception: Joe Kanfer, Elaine Schreiber, Helene K. Cohen and Blanche Sosland.

As part of its continuing focus on knowledge management, JESNA is proud to announce that it has officially launched the first of its Sosland Online Jewish Education Resource Centers, the Jewish day school site, at the annual June Board meeting. The Center can be accessed through the home page of JESNA's Web site at www.jesna.org. Current resources on the Jewish day school site include: publications, annotated links to resources on teacher education, board development, day school initiatives, and more.

JESNA is grateful to the Sosland

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Dr. Jonathan Woocher

In the last issue of @jesna.org I gave you an interim report on our strategic planning process. The first phase of that process — preparing the plan — is now complete. The JESNA Board discussed and ratified our Strategic Plan, “Building Jewish Education and JESNA for the 21st Century,” at its June meeting. Now we are into phase two: taking action to implement the plan. This will be the more challenging, and more expensive, part.

In his Chair’s column in this issue, Joe Kanfer sounds the major theme of our plan — this is the time for all of us to come together to build a system for Jewish educational excellence. Thanks to a decade of initiative, innovation, and investment on the part of literally thousands of educators and community and philanthropic leaders, this achievement is now within our grasp. Over the next decade we can ensure that every Jew, child or adult, will have access to quality Jewish educational experiences in a host of different forms and venues that will catalyze and support her or his ongoing Jewish growth. We

know what is necessary to achieve this vision. What remains is to take the steps to do so.

Armed with our new Strategic Plan, JESNA is both eager to take up this challenge and prepared to play a unique and important role in helping to meet it.

Our analysis tells us that there are four key elements that are required to produce and sustain educational excellence:

- People — talented and committed volunteer leaders, professional educators, advocates and supporters
- Knowledge and know-how — information and ideas about how to make Jewish education work better
- Strong, collaborative networks and relationships — the willingness and ability of all components of the Jewish educational enterprise to work cooperatively and to share knowledge, resources, and experiences for the common good
- Financial resources — the money that makes it possible to pursue and maintain excellence

JESNA specializes in building and bringing together these four types of “capital” — human, intellectual, social, and financial — and pointing them toward the task of strengthening educational institutions and performance. This is the

essence of what we do: seeking out good people, equipping them with the knowledge they need to perform at their best, facilitating the connections among them that allow the whole to grow greater than the sum of its parts, and eliciting and guiding the additional financial investment from communities and private funders that is necessary for good ideas to flower into enduring achievements.

The JESNA we are now creating will be more than a service agency; it will be a system-builder. Using our core operating principles of leveraging (building on existing assets and efforts), partnering (working with allies who complement our strengths), and continuous improvement (stimulating new initiatives and fostering ongoing learning), we will implement systematic efforts to promote educational excellence in three key areas:

- **Human resource development** — recruiting, developing, and retaining top-flight professionals and informed and dedicated volunteer leaders;
- **Knowledge management and dissemination** — ensuring that educators and volunteer leaders have the information and understanding we need to guide educational policy-making and practice; and
- **Organizational change and educational improvement**

— building the institutions and programs needed to reach and educate more Jews more effectively.

To pursue initiatives in these three areas consistently and successfully over the long term, we need to redesign JESNA. The excellent model that the agency’s founders developed for the 1980s is simply inadequate today. We intend over the next several years to build a series of centers at JESNA — modeled on our highly successful Berman Center for Research and Evaluation — that will become repositories of expertise in important substantive arenas like day school, congregational, youth, and early childhood education, as well as what we now call “know-how” centers specializing in areas like institutional change, educational technology, leadership education and advocacy. These are building blocks for excellence that cut across all of Jewish education’s many settings and constituencies. By combining the energies and expertise of our content centers, our “know-how” centers, and our many external partners, we will create a new generation of initiatives aimed at elevating the Jewish educational system as a whole.

Many of these initiatives have been needed and urged for years — a Jewish education databank; a sophisticated human resource management

system encompassing recruitment, development, recognition, and retention; a leadership academy; a diffusion network for “best practices”; a comprehensive approach to integrating technology into educational practice. They are vital if we are to transform Jewish education from today’s

variegated landscape of peaks and valleys into a high plateau of consistent excellence. With our strategic plan, JESNA is committed to making them happen at last.

A plan in and of itself is worth little. So, we have turned immediately to the task of

laying the groundwork for turning what is on paper into reality. This involves many additional conversations with staff and Board members and with prospective partners and supporters, both to refine the plan itself (which must remain a living entity) and to help us identify and achieve

the capabilities needed to begin implementing the plan intensively.

As I said last time, keep watching this space. What we have planned will be challenging, for sure. But also exciting and rewarding. After all, it’s the Jewish future that’s at stake.

DAY SCHOOLS

Continental Council Addresses Major Needs of Jewish Day School Education

Issues of critical importance to day school education were discussed at the most recent meeting of the Continental Council, which met in early June. The Council, sponsored and convened by JESNA and UJC, is meant to ensure the viability and vitality of Jewish day schools.

Lay and professional leaders from national day school associations, religious movements, central agencies for Jewish education, federations, foundations, and other national Jewish organizations met for joint planning, advocacy, and information sharing. Discussions revolved around six salient issues: salaries, benefits, professional recruitment, development and retention, marketing and advocacy, and affordability and community relations.

The Council is part of a continuing effort by JESNA and UJC to bring together the full range of stakeholders in day school education and strengthen the day school movement.

“We are moving forward with a continental agenda, driven by a sense of urgency to meet the challenges and problems that face our day school system,” said Marion Blumenthal, a Council member, JESNA Board member, and chair of CoJIR, the Commission on Jewish Identity and Renewal of the UJA Federation of NY. “Hopefully, our deliberations will ensure success for the future of day schools.”

Experts from inside and outside the Jewish day school world shared their knowledge of the state of the art and presented different ways to approach the six major issues. Presenters included: Robert Aronson, chief executive officer of the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit; Robert Ciampoli, headmaster of the Rohan Woods School in St. Louis, MO; Robert Kreischer,

a consultant and executive director of the Tesseract School in Eagen, MN; Miriam May, a private consultant in Newton, MA; Susan Black Parchi, a private consultant in Boston; and Rheua Stakely, an organizational consultant in Wayland, MA.

The presenters acted as resources for attendees as they met in working groups to address the six major topics. Each working group crafted short-term

action plans for the next year, which will be processed by the Council’s Steering Committee and put into action this fall.

Lynda Giles, JESNA and UJC Board member, and Rabbi Joshua Elkin, executive director of Partnership for Excellence in Jewish Education (PEJE), serve as the Council’s co-chairs. Claire Ellman, JESNA Board member, and Rabbi Robert Hirt, of the Association of Modern Orthodox Day Schools and Yeshiva High Schools, are vice chairs.



From left to right: Rabbi Joshua Elkin, Lynda Giles, Claire Ellman and Rabbi Robert Hirt.

For more information on the Continental Council for Jewish Day School Education, please contact Steve Kraus at 212-284-6893.

CHAIR'S COLUMN



Joe Kanfer

The Question

A look back at the history of the Jewish community in North America over the past hundred years would surely lead us to conclude that there is virtually nothing that we cannot accomplish when we put our minds (and our hearts) to it. Whether our need was to fight anti-Semitism, build the state of Israel, or support Jewish students on college campuses, we have demonstrated both the will and the means to meet every challenge and overcome every obstacle. We have built a remarkable array of highly effective organizations and compiled a truly enviable record of achievement.

Jon Woocher and I have lately been visiting with leaders and

fundators across the country, talking with them about JESNA's dramatic new Strategic Plan, designed to challenge our current assumptions about what Jewish education can and should be. As we consult with these men and women, all passionate and generous advocates for Jewish life, one question is often asked. "Why is it that the Jewish community has not mobilized to make excellence in Jewish education a priority on a par with other critical priorities?"

In fact, it is puzzling that the Jewish community has not achieved for Jewish education what it has achieved in other areas of Jewish needs. Often in our history, our community has confronted difficult and even life-threatening issues, some of which had built and festered over many years. At some point, there came a moment of crisis and clarity, when our leaders saw that Jewish life or Jewish lives were at risk unless concerted action was taken. We are grateful that they took that action...and fundamentally re-imagined the infra-

structure of our community to ensure our future.

There is no doubt Jewish education is now at, or perhaps long past, that stage. Despite all the investments in individual programs and sites, and the not insubstantial gains over the past years, our Jewish educational system as a whole is still plagued by inconsistent performance that threatens the very vitality of Jewish life. As a community, we talk often of our commitment to Jewish education, and that talk is deeply felt. Yet, the question remains. Why have we not come together to do what is necessary?

As the result of a year of deep reflection on the needs and possibilities of Jewish education — and a corresponding look at what JESNA can do — we believe that we have the beginnings of the answer. We have developed a dynamic strategic plan to build, for the first time, a Jewish education system with excellence at its core. I am convinced that JESNA is now at the point where we have the vision and organizational wherewithal to

create, with partners across the country and the spectrum of Jewish life, a lasting solution for Jewish education.

It will mean that this generation of leaders must do what our greatest predecessors have done in their day — identify the critical challenge (and the remarkable opportunity) at hand and mobilize for effective and far-reaching action.

Let it not be said of our generation that we failed to solve the very solvable problem of educational mediocrity facing our people — and lost the chance to engage millions of Jews in their tradition. Let it be said that we, like those before us, mobilized and achieved success.

I ask you to join with JESNA to build a system for Jewish educational excellence. Whatever your role may be — whether as a JESNA Board member, Jewish leader in your local or national communities, educator, concerned layperson — we urge you to join with us as we make Jewish education the priority it must be, in deed as well as word.

LAUNCH, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Foundation for its generous grant of \$1 million, which has enabled the creation and endowment of the Sosland Online Jewish Education Resource Centers. The Sosland Foundation, in Kansas City, Missouri, is a private philanthropic foundation funded and directed by family members. "We continue to be impressed with JESNA's ability to provide cutting-edge educational tools for Jewish

educators," said Blanche Sosland, a vice chair of JESNA's Board. "We have been most gratified by the positive response and excellent suggestions we have received from people around the country about this great new tool."

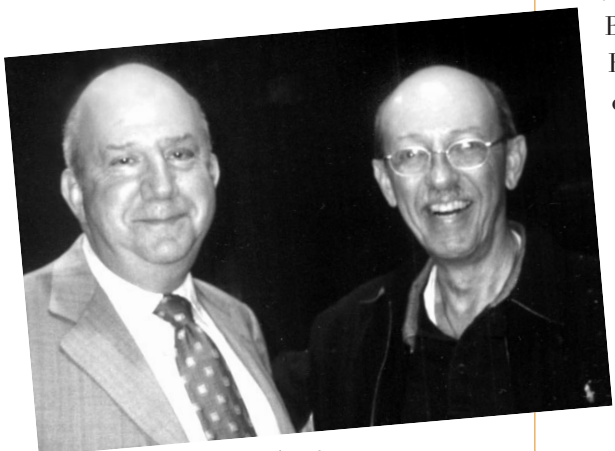
Ultimately, the Sosland Online Resource Centers will serve as "one-stop" sources of instantly accessible information for professional and volunteer leaders on major topics in Jewish education. New sites focusing on

media and technology, congregational and communal education, youth programming, research and evaluation, and educator recruitment and development are planned. Each resource center will include up-to-date research, examples of "promising practices," discussions of key issues in the field, and networking opportunities for users.

For more information, please contact Steve Kraus at 212-284-6893.

BOARD MEETING, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Plan, Martin Linsky of Harvard University facilitated a workshop that



Michael Rukin and Neil Greenbaum.

focused on the role of the Board in spearheading the changes that JESNA will be undertaking.

Another highlight of the meeting was the official launch of the first of the Sosland Online Jewish Education Resource Centers, a project funded through a grant by the Sosland Foundation (see page 1). JESNA celebrated the completion of the first stage of this project with a virtual tour of the Jewish Day School Resource Center,

followed by a champagne reception.

JESNA Board member, Marion Blumenthal, chair of the Renaissance & Renewal Task Force on Educational Engagement with Israel, led a session on Israel education. Jeff Lasday, chair of the Association of Directors of Central Agencies (ADCA), joined her to discuss ADCA's ongoing *Mifgash* (Encounter) initiative to strengthen Israel and Jewish peoplehood education. A pas-



Meeting Chairs Richard Krugel and Amy Goott.

sionate discussion ensued on how we can place Israel education higher on the



Joel Granoff and Blanche Sosland.

national agenda. Strategies were offered on how to engage endowment professionals, federations, community youth professionals, and others around this agenda.

The JESNA Board meeting marked the beginning of a busy week for JESNA and was followed by two other successful JESNA-sponsored events: the second meeting of the Continental Council for Jewish Day School Education (see page 3) and a special consultation on Distance Learning and E-Learning in the Jewish community (see page 11).

CONGREGATIONAL AND COMMUNAL JEWISH EDUCATION

Partnership with Synagogue 2000: *Limud* Curriculum to Debut this Fall

As a natural outgrowth of the work of our Committee on Congregational and Communal Jewish Education, JESNA has entered into a partnership with Synagogue 2000. Synagogue 2000 is a national institute that collaborates with groups of North American synagogues of all denominations to transform them into

sacred communities by blending authoritative Jewish values and knowledge with the best practices of contemporary organizational development.

Over the past two years, the leadership of 13 Detroit synagogues has reviewed its resources and re-envisioned its agenda in the areas of *t'filah* (prayer) and *kehillah kodoshah* (sacred community). JESNA is working with this Detroit cohort of Synagogue 2000 on its next step, focusing on education. The curriculum we are writing, called "*Limud*: Study and Learning in the Synagogue," takes a sys-

temic approach to education and will be used this fall. JESNA is working in particular on the aspect of the plan that relates to congregational schooling. Networking conferences, Jewish study, and leadership development seminars will equip the synagogue leaders with the knowledge and skills to effect change in the foundations of their communities.

For more information, please contact Steve Kraus at 212-284-6893.

Bikkurim is now accepting applications on an ongoing basis. Applications may be downloaded at www.bikkurim.org. For more information, potential applicants may call Amy Amiel at 202-223-6963.

Three New Projects Are Beneficiaries of *Bikkurim*, an Incubator Program of JESNA and UJC

“First fruits” of a new season have taken root at JESNA this year with three new programs that are participants in **Bikkurim: An Incubator for New Jewish Ideas**, a joint program of JESNA, UJC and the Kaminer Family Foundation.

The three programs, selected through a competitive application process, aim to advance Jewish learning, involvement, community building, social action and Jewish life. As participants in *Bikkurim*, the programs will receive a wide range of services from JESNA and UJC, including office space, support services, stipends, and mentoring by Jewish communal specialists, business professionals and volunteer leaders who will help to develop and grow the new entities.

The three new participants are:

Kehilat Hadar – A bi-weekly, traditional egalitarian *minyan* and study community on Manhattan’s Upper West Side, committed to creating a religious environment for those in their 20’s and 30’s.

Hazon – A pluralistic organization promoting visionary projects, such as the Cross-USA Jewish Environmental Bike Ride, offering participants life-changing experiences.

Toldot.org: the Online Jewish Museum for the Next Generation – An internet-based, interactive exhibition space that will serve as a forum for contemporary Jewish youth culture, uniting Jewish children and teens across time and space.

The *Bikkurim* project was launched in the fall of 2000, with five selected projects given a 24-month residency to grow according to their missions.

Two of *Bikkurim*’s pilot programs, **Matan** and **Storahtelling**, will continue in the program as “senior residents,” a testament to the success of the joint endeavor of JESNA, UJC and the Kaminer Family Foundation.

“It’s been wonderful to watch these young Jewish leaders grow their projects and organizations and to see the great impact they have had on the Jewish community in such a short period of time,” said Jonathan Woocher, JESNA president. “I’m looking forward to welcoming the new group of *Bikkurim* residents and to affording them the skills and exposure to the Jewish organizational world that they wouldn’t otherwise receive.”

Other current residents, Keren Mach’ar, the New Shul, and *Heeb* Magazine, whose terms with *Bikkurim* expire at the end of the summer, will maintain their relationship with JESNA and UJC through ongoing networking services and support.

EDUCATOR RECRUITMENT AND DEVELOPMENT



DeLeT Opens the Door to 18 Fellows this Summer

Mazal tov to the inaugural DeLeT cohort comprised of 18 fellows and nine participating day schools!

DeLeT fellows began their fellowship on June 30, 2002 at either Brandeis University, under the direction of Dr. Sharon Feiman Nemser and Judy Elkin, or at Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion, Los Angeles under the direction of Dr. Michael Zeldin and Luisa Latham.

The lead gift for DeLeT came from philanthropist and day school supporter Laura Lauder, who was joined by a number of other prominent philanthropists. JESNA serves as the fiscal and administrative agent for DeLeT, and Jonathan Woocher chairs its Executive Committee.

DeLeT is now recruiting candidates for Cohort Two, whose fellowship will begin in July 2003. For more information or to refer candidates to this program, contact Dr. Jane West Walsh, executive director at 847-564-4515 or check out the Web site at www.delet.org.

Cohort One at Brandeis University

Jewish Community Day School (JCDS), Newton, Mass.

Head of School:
Hamutal Gavish

Fellows:
Caroline Bermant
Liat Resnikoff

The Rashi School, Newton, Mass.

Acting Head of School:
Shlomit Lipton

Fellows:
Jodi Hirsch
Sandi (Alexandra) Intraub
Glenna Halperin
Leah Corson

The Ruth and Max Alperin Schecter Day School, Providence, Rhode Island

Head of School:
Dr. Penney Stein

Fellows:
Jamie Faith Hankin
Daniel Bar-Nahum

South Area Solomon Schechter Day School, Stoughton, Mass.

Head of School:
Jane T. Cohen

Fellows:
Shira Price
Sarah Maguire

Cohort One at HUC–JIR

Los Angeles area

Adat Ari El Day School

Head of School:
Lana Marcus

Fellows:
Michelle Fainsztein
Amit Raben

Pressman Academy at Beth Am Synagogue

Head of School:
Rabbi Mitchel Malkus

Fellows:
Sapphira Fein
Marcelle Kasheri

Stephen S. Wise Elementary School

Principal:
Rochelle Ginsburg

Fellow:
Lauren Whitefield

San Francisco Bay area

Mid-Peninsula Jewish Community Day School

Head of School:
Dr. Gerald Elgarten

Fellows:
Daniella Ben-Simon
Jennifer Wakefield

Brandeis Hillel Day School

Head of School:
Dr. Henry Schreibman

Principal:
Chaim Heller

Fellow:
Rachel Fishman

EDUCATOR RECRUITMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

Bringing the Teacher Shortage Crisis Under Control

As the Jewish teacher shortage has taken its toll on Jewish congregational and day schools, a number of programs have emerged to identify talented young people and develop their skills as educators.

In past issues, we have highlighted various programs that recruit and prepare undergraduate and post-graduate students to be tomorrow’s teachers. Some of these initiatives are offered through JESNA, while others are run through organizations and institutions throughout the continent; some are long established, while others have just been launched.

This issue features updates on the exciting recent achievements of some of the most successful teacher training initiatives and resources; a report straight from a Jewish educator who got her start through the Lainer Interns for Jewish Education, one of the pioneering programs in this field; and a showcase of a promising newcomer to the scene, the Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik Institute’s Teacher Training Internship Program (see page 15).



Graduate Seminar in Israel

Where in Israel can students come together once a month to learn about and discuss key issues, meet interesting professionals in

the education field, and be exposed to a broad range of career options in contemporary Jewish education in North America? The JESNA Graduate Seminar in Israel – one of the few pluralistic Jewish frameworks for Jewish students to meet Jews of other backgrounds and lifestyles. Involved in the program are some of the most outstanding and serious Jewish post-graduate students, who have come to Israel to study this past year in a variety of programs (primarily for no academic credit) at a time when most people are staying away!

In the fall, over 35 people registered and attended the Seminar sessions, some commuting from as far as Tel Aviv. If the measurement of the success of such a program is based on attendance, this year was a success. If it is based on an increase in the number of participants considering a career in Jewish education, it was a success. If it is based on the number of people who go on to join other Jewish education programs (such as DeLeT), it was a success!

To receive more information about the Graduate Seminar in Israel, please contact Sally Klein-Katz at smk-k@netvision.net.il.

Jewish Educators Corps Completes Second Year

More than 30 university students in San Diego, St. Louis, and Providence are well on their way to becoming Jewish educators. These young people are members of the second class of the Jewish Educators Corps, a program that supplements students’ academic studies by placing them as teachers in Jewish schools in their college communities. With the sponsorship of JESNA and Hillel and the support of the Crown Family Foundation, the Jewish Educators Corps was created in the fall of 2000 to provide university students with a formal opportunity to learn about the field of Jewish education while experiencing it first-hand as teachers in local congregational schools.

Building on the outstanding success of the Lainer Interns for Jewish Education in Israel, the Jewish Educators Corps combines a formal seminar in the principles and practices of teaching with hands-on experience in a classroom under the tutelage of a senior teacher. In addition, each student receives a stipend from the community.

We are pleased to announce that many of the students in the pilot year of the program have continued their involvement in Jewish education. We are beginning a formal outreach to the various alums of the program to encourage the new graduates to continue their involvement in Jewish education and Jewish communal life.

A formal evaluation of the program is being conducted by Dr. Wendy Rosov of the Berman Center at JESNA. Wendy, along with Dr. Paul Flexner, the program coordinator, has visited each of the sites this spring. As we move into the third and final year of the pilot project, we will be exploring different approaches for the continuation of the program in its current communities and for an expansion to other campuses where there are a significant number of Jewish students who may be interested in pursuing a career in Jewish education.

For further information about the program, please contact Paul Flexner at flex@jesna.org.

“Lainer” Notes

Aleza Kulp, one of our original Lainer Interns, tells in her own words how the program helped shape her career:

It is hard for me to believe that almost 10 years ago, I began my career path in Jewish education. I was studying at Rutgers University in the Hebraic Studies department and had planned to go to Hebrew University for my junior year of college. I felt as a young adult that I needed to be connected to Israel and learn more about my Judaism. I was not sure at the time what I was going to do with my major, but I was happy having chosen it.

When I arrived in Israel, I ran into Shimon Lipsky, whom I knew from Camp Ramah in the Poconos. We began talking about my courses, and he told me about a new program encouraging young people to enter the field of Jewish education. It was called Israel Interns for Jewish Education

(though it has since been renamed the Lainer Interns for Jewish Education). The thought of a career in Jewish education had not really crossed my mind before our talk. At that time, I did not imagine that this internship would help shape me into who I am today: a Jewish educator.

JESNA and my yearlong program in Israel convinced me that my direction, upon returning to the States, should be in education.

Ten years later, I am the Director of Education at a Conservative synagogue in Mamaroneck, NY. I continued my studies after college at the Davidson School for Jewish Education of the Jewish Theological Seminary (JTS). Immediately after my studies at JTS, I began working in the afternoon Hebrew school setting.

It is my goal to show Jewish children who attend Hebrew school just how exciting it is to be Jewish. They should be able to receive a strong Jewish education when they are young — and not have to wait until college. This job is a dream for me, and I love every day of it!

It was the experience of being an Israel Intern for JESNA that solidified my interest in Jewish education. JESNA and my yearlong program in Israel convinced me that my direction, upon returning to the States, should be in education. I am still grateful to JESNA for investing in me 10 years ago.

Everett JewishJobFinder Makes Huge Impact on the Jewish Job Market

After its auspicious launch last October, the Everett JewishJobFinder (www.JewishJobFinder.com) is paving the way for job seekers and employers in the fields of Jewish education and Jewish communal service across North America. The site currently hosts over 900 resumes and close to 300 jobs and has 2,075 registered users, of whom 500 are employers and 1,575 are job seekers. These figures do not include the significant number of visitors who are not registered at the site.

Employers have responded enthusiastically to the opportunity to review resumes and post positions in this centralized location, while job seekers similarly have been eager to post their resumes on the site and to scour the site for jobs.

In just nine months, visitors to the site nearly doubled. Since its launch, the site has also seen a steady increase in the number of jobs and resumes posted by employers and job seekers respectively. Increases such as these are promising indicators of success and point to the likelihood of continued popularity.

Enabled by a gift from Henry Everett and sustained by generous individual donations, this centralized Web resource filled a long overdue

need within the Jewish community. The Everett JewishJobFinder continues to prove itself as the Web site that enables a multitude of Jewish organizations to broaden the scope of their personnel searches by reaching out to job seekers with whom they would otherwise never come into contact. Likewise, job seekers benefit from the expanded possibilities for careers within Jewish education and Jewish communal service.

For further information, please contact Judith Goldstein-Fischer at 212-284-6894.



YOUTH INITIATIVES

Five North American Communities Lead the Way in Informal Education for Youth

Across North America, communities will agree that one of the major challenges they face today is engaging their Jewish youth in informal Jewish education. Although many communities are seeking new programs and strategies that will keep teens involved and attract those who are not yet active, JESNA's experience strongly suggests that it is unlikely that any one community will succeed without collaboration and knowledge sharing. Last October, JESNA and the Institute for Information Jewish Education at Brandeis University (IJE), a valued partner, organized the Kol HaNa'ar Conference to help more than 30 communities take advantage of model programs and resources to enrich the experience of their teen populations. This successful conference was an opportunity for sharing conceptual frameworks, networking with colleagues, and developing new skills in planning and implementing strategies for servicing Jewish youth. It also marked the introduction of the Youth Initiatives Portfolio, a major resource to stimulate and guide local planning, programming and professional development.

Building on those experiences, we are ready to advance this work to the next stages. JESNA and IJE are continuing to work together on an innovative new program called the **Partnering Communities Program**, responding to the need for community collaboration and expert consultation. Five communities, all at different stages of their community youth work, have been identified and invited to join JESNA and IJE in this partnership.

We are proud to announce that the five participants in the first stage of the **Partnering Communities Program** are Atlanta, Boston, Kansas City, San Francisco, and Vancouver.

Although each community is working on initiatives that focus on different areas of programming and have unique needs, collective problem solving is essential to all. The communities, represented by teams of professionals and lay leaders, are receiving invaluable assistance in pursuing new strategies as they work on their community-based youth initiatives. At the same time, JESNA and IJE are learning "best practices," which will be shared with the field at-large through the



Community youth professionals from 12 communities discuss exciting future initiatives, at the first meeting of the Partnering Communities Program.

second iteration of the Youth Initiatives Portfolio and other means. As JESNA and IJE learn more about what works in establishing and maintaining successful community-wide youth initiatives, the field of informal Jewish youth education will be strengthened.

For more information on the Partnering Communities Program, contact Devorah Silverman at 212-284-6887.

Community Youth Professionals Convene in Kansas City

For the first time since the Kol HaNa'ar Conference, 14 community youth professionals from 12 communities came together in Kansas City for a roundtable consultation to discuss professional development for youth professionals. JESNA and IJE developed an exciting program that provided opportunities for learning, sharing, strategizing, and developing a broad agenda for next steps for this important and growing network.

The roundtable included representation from communities in Atlanta, Baltimore, Boston, Broward County, Detroit, Kansas City, Los Angeles, New York, Orange County, Rhode Island, Washington DC, and Western Massachusetts. Feedback from participants was overwhelmingly positive. Communities appreciated the opportunity to come together again and address the very complex and varied needs of local youth professionals.

Our own JESNA Board member, Blanche Sosland, joined us for part of the program. She was able to learn more about initiatives that the various local communities are working on. She joined the other participants in developing an ambitious agenda of issues and challenges that they would like to address as a group with the assistance and facilitation of JESNA and IJE staff.

For more information, contact Devorah Silverman at 212-284-6887.



Covenant Foundation Awards Three Outstanding Educators

The Covenant Foundation, a partnership of the Crown Family Foundation and JESNA, has announced the recipients of the 12th annual Covenant Awards for outstanding Jewish educators. Each award carries a \$25,000 prize for the award recipient and an additional \$5,000 to the

recipient's institution. Selected from over 100 nominees, the three winners embody leadership and excellence within the field of Jewish education. The distinguished recipients are:

- Ms. Rivy Poupko Kletenik, Director of Jewish Education Services at the Jewish Education Council of the Jewish Federation of Greater Seattle in Seattle.

- Rabbi Sidney Schwarz, founder and President of PANIM: The Institute for Jewish Leadership and Values in Rockville, MD.
- Rabbi Peretz Wolf-Prusan, the Rabbi and Family Life Educator of Congregation Emanu-El in San Francisco.

The Covenant Foundation can be reached via e-mail at info@covenantfn.org.

MEDIA AND TECHNOLOGY

Distance Learning Consultation Offers Participants Up-Close Look

After years of discussion and experimentation, the Jewish community has begun to experience success in using technology effectively in the area of distance learning. This became even more evident early this summer, when JESNA and the BJE of Greater New York sponsored a distance learning consultation, “E-learning and Jewish Education: Creating an Agenda.” Top educators, administrators, funders, entrepreneurs, and technology developers from North America and Israel came together to begin to map out the state of the art in this growing and important field.

Ann Kirschner, the President and Chief Executive Officer of Fathom, the first interactive knowledge network associated with leading universities, libraries, museums, and research institutions, presented the keynote. She challenged participants to imagine implications and opportunities of e-learning for Jewish education. “Ann’s presentation helped me look into the future and gave me an awareness of the trends and the possibilities that are out there,” said Helene K. Cohen, chair of JESNA’s educational technology committee.

Helene then brought the many strands of the day’s discussions together in her capacity as “weaver.” She moderated a panel of e-learning models in the Jewish world and a “fish bowl” interview with e-learning stakeholders, where educators, learners, and funders shared challenges and stories of success.

Led by JESNA’s Associate Vice President for Media and Technology Caren N. Levine, participants mapped next steps for creating an international distance learning agenda. Among other developments, participants envisioned creating a central clearinghouse of e-learning for Jewish education, which would offer an online databank of e-learning projects; developing collabora-

tive resources for Hebrew language distance learning programs; and creating a centralized “toolkit” of professional development tools for e-teaching.

Joel Granoff, JESNA Board member from Austin, TX and conference participant, has already seen results from the conference impacting the country. Marty Schloss and Sara Seligson of the BJE and Caren Levine and Rebecca Goldwater of JESNA recently visited Austin, TX to share insights from the consultation with local Jewish educators. The meeting in Austin confirmed that there is tremendous interest in connecting communities, learners, and educators through new technologies.

To learn more about this consultation, please contact Rebecca Goldwater at 212-284-6982.

NEWS BYTE — Media and Technology

Introducing JESNA’s Newest E-Newsletter: *Tools for Learning*

Check out *Tools for Learning*, JESNA’s newest electronic newsletter, coming this fall. The most recent addition to JESNA’s Jewish Educators’ Electronic Toolkit initiative, *Tools for Learning*, will showcase the latest use of media technology in Jewish education, such as new media projects, software, and Web sites. Our goal is to bring together a wide range of information, materials, and curricular guides to help Jewish educators use media and technology more extensively and effectively in their work.

To submit ideas and submissions, or to request to be on the mailing list, please contact Rebecca Goldwater at 212-284-6982 or rebecca@jesna.org.

RENAISSANCE AND RENEWAL

4th Annual Alliance for Adult Jewish Learning Conference

In the best of all possible worlds, Jewish education is an ongoing process that both informs and enriches every stage of a person's life. Focusing on the adult stage, the Alliance for Adult Jewish Learning held its 4th annual conference this past June in Chicago. This three-day meeting on "Applying the Theory of Adult Education to the Art of Adult Jewish Learning" attracted over 80 directors, coordinators, teachers, and supporters of adult Jewish learning programs from throughout the continent, including JESNA Board members Lois Zachary and Barbara Shuman. It proved an opportunity for the Alliance to foster dialogue between professionals and lay leaders in adult Jewish learning and to advocate its cause.

Two critical issues highlighted throughout the conference were the need to provide high quality professional development for all those involved in facilitating adult growth and learning, from congregational rabbis to academics and teachers in the system, and to develop a research agenda focusing on measuring the success of programs and initiatives. "I seldom feel that my time has been as well spent as it was at this conference," exclaimed participant Barbara Shuman, who is also the coordinator of the *Kallah* Program for the UAHC Department of Adult Jewish Growth. "It was very satisfying to have the opportunity to discuss with others so many issues that we all agree are so vital."



Dr. Elizabeth Tisdell of National-Louis University.

The conference featured time for educators to network with colleagues and spend time in meaningful text study. The keynote speaker, Dr. Elizabeth (Libby) Tisdell of National-Louis University, focused on both the theoretical foundation of adult education and the importance of spirituality in adult learning; subsequent information sessions were united by the theme of spirituality.



From left to right: Bill Rubin, Executive Director of CFJE; Alan Ades, Renaissance & Renewal Adult Jewish Learning Chair; Barbara Shuman; Rabbi Steven Denker, Congregation Kol Ami; and Jonathan Woocher.

The conference was co-sponsored by the Community Foundation for Jewish Education of Metropolitan Chicago and the Renaissance & Renewal Pillar of UJC and JESNA. According to Paul Flexner, chair of the Alliance, "This conference was a major step toward raising the importance of adult Jewish learning as a key item on the North American Jewish agenda."

For more information, please contact Paul Flexner at 212-284-6879.

NEWS BYTE — Renaissance and Renewal

***Hadesh: Renewing Jewish Communities* — R&R Community Consultation to Be Held in November**

Across North America, community leaders from a wide range of settings are working to forge a Jewish Renaissance. Essential to this work are opportunities for leaders to see and hear what other communities are doing, to analyze together what is working and what is not, to learn from those on the cutting edge, and to engage in collaborative agenda-setting.

On November 18–19, prior to the UJC General Assembly in Philadelphia, leadership will have the opportunity to come together to advance the Jewish renaissance in North America by participating in this community consultation, called *Hadesh: Renewing Jewish Communities*.

Over 22 intensive hours, this consultation will help participants assess the state of current renaissance and renewal efforts in their communities, challenge them to create effective long-term strategies to carry this work forward, and offer practical guidance in taking the next steps to transform our communities and institutions into vibrant centers of Jewish learning and living.

For additional information on how your community can get involved, please contact Andrea Fram, staff associate, Renaissance & Renewal Alliance, 212-284-6930 or andrea.fram@ujc.org. Registration fees will be \$125 with UJC General Assembly registration and \$175 for the *Hadesh* consultation only.

Israel Education Resource Center

Though Israel has always been at the top of the JESNA agenda, the current *matsav* has only served to intensify our commitment. JESNA and UJC have created the new Israel Education Resource Center, which has recently been launched at www.ujc.org and www.jesna.org. The site can be accessed through the Jewish Life or Israel/World Jewry sections of the

UJC Web site or in the Hot Topics section of the JESNA Web site. The Resource Center contains Web links, downloadable curriculum, one-time programs, educational materials for purchase, pictures, maps, and more.

We want to thank everyone who has submitted materials to the Israel Education Resource Center over the last nine months. Additional material is still welcome and should be emailed to israeleducation@ujc.org. All material

will be posted as Web links, Microsoft Word documents, or PDF files and should include a short description of the resource and appropriate contact information. The Israel Education Resource Center will be updated on an ongoing basis to keep educators apprised of the most current materials!

For additional information regarding the Israel Education Resource Center, please contact Andrea Fram at andrea.fram@ujc.org.

KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

JESNA Resource Librarian Serves as “Information Concierge” for Agencies, Funders

Information isn't very useful, if you don't know where to find it. In response to growing requests for help in locating information about Jewish educational programs, resources, and developments, JESNA recently announced a new service, a “Knowledge and Resource Librarian,” that will make such information more accessible to educational leaders and funders interested in supporting Jewish education.

“The Resource Librarian will operate as a kind of ‘information concierge,’” stated Joe Kanfer, JESNA's Board Chair, in announcing the new initiative and the appointment of Ari Schuchman to fill the position, initially on a half-time basis. “As efforts to improve Jewish education expand, there is a growing desire to learn about good things happening elsewhere in the field, to find better tools and resources, and to identify potential partners in addressing new challenges and opportunities,” Kanfer noted. “The Resource Librarian will be available to help organizations and individuals make

these connections and locate the information they are looking for.”

The new service is being launched thanks to support from a number of individuals who began to discuss the concept at a meeting of the Jewish Funders Network Jewish Education Working Group. Initial supporters include JESNA Board members Jaynie Schultz, Anne Jaffe and Arnee Winshall, as well as Laura Lauder, Marvin and Arona Smotrich, and Lee Furman. “This service is long overdue in the Jewish education world,” Jaynie Schultz asserted. “It will help make educators more efficient and funders more knowledgeable about what else is happening.”

As Resource Librarian, Ari Schuchman will take advantage of JESNA's knowledge of “best practices” and “lessons learned” throughout the field and of the partnerships it has forged with a variety of program providers, local Jewish communities, and funders. Although the service aims eventually to be a comprehensive one, able to field questions pertaining to all domains of Jewish education, in its first months it will focus primarily on the arenas of day school education, congregational education, youth programming, human resources develop-

ment, and educational technology. In addition to serving callers from foundations, central agencies, planning departments of federations, and national education associations, Ari will be building a database of information and contacts that will become available to the general public in the future.

The Resource Librarian parallels another of JESNA's major new initiatives in the area of knowledge management, the Sosland Online Resource Centers (see page 1), which will provide access to online databases and resources in specific educational areas. Jonathan Woocher, president, hailed the two new initiatives as complementary components of JESNA's core strategy to use knowledge gathering and dissemination as a key tool for supporting the drive for excellence in Jewish education.

To contact JESNA's Resource Librarian with an inquiry, please send an email to ari@jesna.org, or call 212-284-6897. All inquiries will receive a response indicating the extent to which the Resource Librarian can be helpful and an anticipated timetable.

44 Teachers Receive Grinspoon-Steinhardt Award

What is better than close collaboration with one philanthropist? Close collaboration with two philanthropists! 2002 marks the third year that Harold Grinspoon has been honoring Jewish educators from across the United States and Canada. It also marks the first year that Michael Steinhardt joins him in funding and steering the newly renamed Grinspoon-Steinhardt Awards for Excellence in Jewish Education. In partnership with JESNA, the Harold Grinspoon Foundation and the Jewish Life Network/Steinhardt Foundation are recognizing teachers who make a lifelong commitment to classroom-based Jewish education – and encouraging communities and philanthropists to join in rewarding teachers and spearheading their professional growth on both a local and national level.

Although Michael Steinhardt formally announced his sponsorship of the Awards in November 2001, he has long been a committed advocate for Jewish educational excellence, having worked for the formation of the Partnership for Excellence in Jewish Education and in other organizations promoting the revitalization of American Jewish life. Harold

Grinspoon is similarly active in the areas of teacher recruitment, retention, and recognition. Grinspoon created the Award in 2000, using a Jewish educator recognition award from Springfield, MA as a model.

This year’s winning teachers have accomplished outstanding and creative work in their classrooms, including a simulation of the flood story using an aquarium; the coordination of a family *havdalah* program that brings parents together with their children to pray and learn; and the creation of a *kibbutz* in celebration of Yom HaAtzma’ut. Winning teachers received high praise not only from their school principals, but from parents, students, and local agency executives. *Kol hakavod* to the 2002 Grinspoon-Steinhardt Award winners, their schools, and their communities!

Help make a difference in the lives of YOUR LOCAL JEWISH EDUCATORS! If your community participates in the Awards, encourage a principal to nominate the teacher of your choice. If your community is not yet participating, lobby your central agency or federation to do so!

Please call Amy Amiel at 202-223-6963 for more information about the Awards.

Mazal tov to the recipients of the third annual national Grinspoon-Steinhardt Awards for Excellence in Jewish Education!

Ines Ades
Cleveland, OH

Rabbi Baruch Berger
Cincinnati, OH

Cheryl Berger
Bergen County, NJ

Bat Sheva Berman
Minneapolis, MN

Arielle Poster Bigham
Baltimore, MD

Rabbi Amanda Brodie
New Haven, CT

Jennifer Davids
Greater New York Area

Debbie Diamond
Dallas, TX

Sol Factor
Cleveland, OH

Gayle Feldman
Phoenix, AZ

Aliza First
Los Angeles, CA

Ilana Friedlander
San Jose, CA

Marsha Goldstein
Cleveland, OH

Abby Greenwald
Western CT

Nancy Heiden
Columbus, OH

Rivki Herman
Pittsburgh, PA

Roberta Horowitz
Greater New York Area

Rabbi Yakov Horowitz
Rockland County, NY

Molly Jalali
Los Angeles, CA

Heidi Kahn
Orange County, CA

Elisheva Kaminetsky
Greater New York Area

Gigi Kaminetzky
South Palm Beach, FL

Aileen Kramer
Greater Springfield, MA

Sara Laizerovich
Dallas, TX

Nira Lion
Pittsburgh, PA

Sarah Ludwig
Metrowest, NJ

Deena Marom
Los Angeles, CA

Rabbi Baruch Mendelson
Greater New York Area

Ellen Moss
Akron, OH

Rabbi Dov Nimchinsky
Houston, TX

Suri Nowosiolski
Los Angeles, CA

Norine Rosenblum
Greater Kansas City, MO

Rabbi Avraham Schwartz
Greater New York Area

Ilona Shechter
San Francisco, CA

Bea Stadler Z”L
Cleveland, OH

Michelle Steinhart
Greater New York Area

Glenda Stoller
Montreal, Quebec

Shoshana Stotland
San Diego, CA

Lisa Wiener
Greater New York Area

Judy Weintraub
St. Louis, MO

Kathy Wise
Cincinnati, OH

Stephen Weitzman
Greater New York Area

Rabbi Yakov Wolff
Greater Springfield, MA

Edna Yedid
San Diego, CA

Interview with Grinspoon-Steinhardt Award Winner Nancy Heiden of Columbus, OH



How did you feel when you learned you were a Grinspoon-Steinhardt Award Winner? What type of professional development goals do you hope to fill with the Award money?

I was absolutely thrilled and very honored when I found out that I was named a 2002 Grinspoon-Steinhardt Award Winner. I love to study, so I can't wait to use my \$1,500. I know that Spertus Institute of Jewish Studies has a distance learning program; however, I would like to do some serious research before I decide how I will be spending my money. My hope is that I will find a long-term professional growth opportunity. I had a good experience in Israel several years ago on a professional development trip, so I will also look into studying there.

What do you like most about working in the classroom?

My purpose is to get people excited to learn about their Judaism, so I try to model enthusiasm. Coming from a theater background, I tend to be very dramatic and animated, and I communicate my excitement to my classes. To have kids tell me they liked my story so much that they told it to someone else, or to have adults tell me I helped open their eyes – these are wonderful experiences I treasure.

What are some of the challenges and rewards of being a Jewish educator?

The challenges arise from the fact that people in our culture do not always prioritize Judaism. Getting people to incorporate and appreciate Judaism in their daily lives is my challenge. At a recent *Havdalah* ceremony at my synagogue, a mother of one of my students approached me and said, "My son just said the most amazing thing: 'Mom can we do this at home?'" I was moved that both the parent and the child understood that Judaism should be practiced at home and not only in the synagogue. A Judaism that exists in the synagogue only is an incomplete Judaism.

How did you become a Jewish educator?

I am a Jew by choice; I became Jewish in 1981 with the help of Rabbi Scott Glass. When I had finished my studies and gone through the conversion process, he invited me to be a substitute teacher in his school in Ithaca, NY. Later, when I moved to Columbus, he introduced me to a woman named Deborah Cohen, the Educational Director at Congregation Tifereth Israel, who invited me to teach at her school. This was just the beginning, and over the years I have continued to teach more and more.



Nancy Heiden, Grinspoon-Steinhardt Award Winner from Columbus, OH.

EDUCATOR RECRUITMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

The Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik Institute's Teacher Training Internship Program

In the fall of 2003 the Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik Institute will launch the Teacher Training Internship Program, bringing its first group of young men and women to Brookline, MA for a year of student teaching at the Maimonides School, a modern Orthodox day school for boys and girls in grades K-12. Over the past two years, Judaic studies teachers at Maimonides have trained to serve as supportive and self-reflective mentors to incoming interns.

During their year at Maimonides, interns will supplement their student teaching experience with course study at Boston area universities. The Soloveitchik Institute will then place interns in select modern Orthodox day schools across the country for two additional years in which they will receive ongoing support.

The Teacher Training Internship Program of the Rabbi B. Soloveitchik Institute offers an opportunity for future teachers to acquire the skills and the confidence necessary to launch a successful and rewarding career in Jewish education. To qualify for this program, candidates must have obtained an undergraduate degree and demonstrate great promise in Jewish education.

For more information, please contact Amy Katz, executive director, at 617-232-7443.

New Beginnings – Caren Levine, who started as a JESNA intern 16 years ago, is changing her status from Associate Vice President of Media and Technology to Senior Consultant. The JESNA Board and staff celebrated Caren’s transition in style Sunday evening at the June Board meeting. Her tremendous contributions to JESNA in the area of media and technology include the *Jewish Educators’ Electronic Toolkit*; *Site Seeing: Jewish Education on the Web*; the *JESNA Web site*; the *Sosland Online Resource Centers* and much more. We look forward to continuing to work with Caren in her new capacity.

We say **goodbye** to Sidney Clearfield, chief operating officer of Renaissance & Renewal, who came on board last June. Sid played an effective role in this capacity and made important contributions to R&R. We wish him tremendous luck in all of his future endeavors.

Finally, we **welcome** Benita Gayle-Almeleh, who has filled the new position of Director of Jewish Renaissance & Renewal.

Benita is an experienced Jewish communal professional who has worked at the Jewish Council for Public Affairs, American Jewish Congress, American Jewish Committee, and as a Hillel director. In several of these positions, she has served as liaison between the national office and local/regional operations.

Benita is a graduate of Brandeis University’s Hornstein Program in Jewish Communal Service and has a Bachelor’s degree in Judaic Studies. She has also pursued graduate work in Middle Eastern Studies, specializing in Israel policy. She lives in Forest Hills with her husband, Perry, and daughter, Shira.

Introducing JESNA’s New Giving Societies

Recognizing True Innovators for the Sake of Our Tradition

For givers of \$25,000 or more —

The Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakkai Society

Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakkai is known as the “father of wisdom and the father of generations [of scholars]” because he ensured the continuation of Jewish scholarship after Jerusalem fell to Rome in 70 C.E. He was the youngest and most distinguished disciple of Rabbi Hillel.

Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakkai was able to convince the Romans to spare Yavneh, which replaced Jerusalem as the new home of the Sanhedrin, the Jewish Supreme Court, and its Torah sages. He arranged for a place to be set aside in Yavneh (near modern Rehovot) where he could start a small school and study Torah in peace. The school ben Zakkai established at Yavneh became the center of Jewish learning for centuries.

For givers of \$10,000 or more —

The Rabbi Joshua ben Gamla Society

The Talmud in Baba Batra (21a) informs us: “If a child had a father, his father taught him [Torah], and if he had no father, he did not learn at all.” When it became clear that many children were not receiving a Jewish education, Rabbi Joshua ben Gamla, the leader of the Sanhedrin in the 1st century, took it upon himself to establish a system of public education for Jewish children in ancient Judea, the first of its kind in the world. Joshua ben Gamla virtually saved Torah observance by assuming the responsibility of Torah education for those who could not help themselves.

For more information on JESNA’s two new Giving Societies, please contact Ellen Goldstein at 212-284-6886.

OUR PURPOSE: Vibrant Jewish Life *through* Jewish Learning

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

For additional information on JESNA please contact Amy Stein, director of marketing and communications, at (212) 284-6896 or astein@jesna.org.



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JESNA – the Jewish Education Service of North America, Inc. was created in 1981 as the Jewish Federation system’s educational coordinating, planning and development agency. JESNA is widely recognized for its leadership in six different areas, including media and technology, research and evaluation, engaging and empowering Jewish youth, educator recruitment and development, day school education, and congregational and communal 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.