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CIJE correspondence. JESNA report on the Continental  
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JESNA



JEWISH EDUCATION  
SERVICE OF  
NORTH AMERICA, INC.

החברה למען החינוך היהודי  
בצפון אמריקה

UPDATE

Issue 3 — Spring, 1991

## Continental Conference Convenes In Cleveland

**Shoshana Cardin** and **Mort Mandel**, two of North America's most prominent Jewish leaders, are the featured speakers at the first Continental Leadership Conference on Jewish Education. **Rabbi Irving (Yitz) Greenberg**, President of the National Jewish Center for Leadership and Learning (CLAL), will serve as scholar. Sponsored by JESNA, it is billed as a "working conference on the Jewish future," taking place in Cleveland on June 9-11, 1991.

A vision of the Jewish community in the 21st century and the work of Jewish education in shaping that future, is the topic of Ms. Cardin's address. Mr. Mandel outlines the important role lay leadership must play in mobilizing for action and change. Entitled "Towards an Agenda for Jewish Education in the 21st Century," the conference is built around an in-depth examination of four key dimensions of the Jewish educational agenda: new program initiatives; the personnel crisis; marketing Jewish education; and effective planning, advocacy and funding. Other

(Continued on pg. 3)



Shoshana S. Cardin



Morton L. Mandel

## JESNA Receives Wexner Grant

The Wexner Foundation Institutional Grants Program has awarded JESNA and the Council of Jewish Federations a planning grant to develop a training program for prospective executives in Federations and central agencies for Jewish Education. Also participating is the Association of Jewish Family and Children's Agencies.

The grant provides for a planning process which will lead to the development of an Executive Training program. The process will include a study designed to identify shared and distinctive elements of the knowledge, values and skills that senior level professionals in the three fields need in order to move into executive positions. Common learning experiences, as well as specialized areas for each of the settings, will be included in the program.

Joel Daner, Director of Personnel Services for CJF and Paul A. Flexner, Director of Human

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## APPELMAN, COHN AND SIMON NAMED

### First Covenant Award Recipients

Harlene Winnick Appelman, a leader in Jewish family education in Detroit; Ateret Cohn, a former camp director, a fifth grade Bible teacher at the Milwaukee Jewish Day School; and Sara Rubinow Simon, a pioneer in special needs Jewish education, currently at the Board of Jewish Education of Washington, have been chosen as the first recipients of the Covenant Award for exceptional Jewish educators. The Awards, each worth \$20,000, will be presented at a gala dinner on June 9, 1991, at the Continental Leadership Conference on Jewish Education in Cleveland, sponsored by JESNA. Chosen from over 200 nominees from the United States and Canada, they represent the very best in Jewish education in 1991.

Appelman, now a senior consultant at the Jewish Federation of Detroit, is the

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

*Jonathan Woocher*

As I write this, Jews around the world are breathing easier knowing that Israel is no longer in immediate danger from Saddam Hussein and his missiles. But the aftershocks of the Persian Gulf War, and especially what we have learned about Israel-Diaspora relations, should not be permitted simply to dissipate without some reflection. For Jewish education there are some important lessons and challenges.

The months from August through March exposed both the enduring strength and the tenuousness of American Jewry's relationship with Israel. I was fortunate to be in Israel both in January of this year, immediately before the outbreak of war, and again in February, during the midst of the conflict. I've also been involved, together with my colleagues at JESNA, in a major new effort, mounted by the CRB Foundation, the Jewish Agency, JESNA, and the JCC Association, to increase the numbers of American and Canadian youth who participate in educational programs in Israel.



*Jonathan Woocher*

To cut to the heart of the matter: As much as we (particularly the leaders) in the American Jewish community may feel that we have identified and agonized with Israel in its time of anxiety and exposure to attack, our collective performance greatly distressed and disappointed our fellow Jews in Israel. Yes, many North American Jews did come, many students stayed, and many personal expressions of concern and solidarity were proffered and gratefully received. But many more Jews stayed away and educational programs that are geared to Diaspora youth were pushed to the brink of disaster due to dramatically reduced enrollment.

This is not to be taken as a basis for self-flagellation. There are many and good reasons why even Jews who do care deeply about Israel will and should think twice about

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## Covenant Foundation Inaugurates Annual Grants

In an open invitation to the Jewish educational community issued this spring, the Covenant Foundation solicited proposals for the development and implementation of innovative programming in Jewish education. Letters of inquiry have been flowing steadily into the Foundation office at JESNA since March. Noting the resoundingly positive response, Susan Crown, president of the Arie and Ida Crown Memorial and a Covenant Foundation Board member, commented, "There is enormous creativity among Jewish educators. We hope to identify and support their best efforts that will keep the Jewish heritage alive and exciting for the coming generations."



Foundation staff and outside experts are now narrowing the field to the most promising programs, and their creators will be invited in late June to submit full proposals to the Foundation. After intensive review this fall, up to ten grants will be awarded in early December. The maximum grant to a three-year program is \$100,000. It is anticipated that successful programs will be sustained after the grant period by the sponsoring institution and that they will be designed as model programs that can be adapted by other groups. Educators interested in discussing ideas for next year's competition are urged to contact Dr. Judith Ginsberg, the executive director of the Covenant Foundation, at the JESNA office.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It's hard to believe that this year JESNA celebrates its 10th anniversary. It has been an incredible ten years. Over that period of time, JESNA has become increasingly involved, on the continental level, in promoting and guiding the revitalization of Jewish education.



*Neil Greenbaum*

JESNA stands at the cutting edge of Jewish educational thinking and planning, including promoting the importance of adult and family learning, showing how education can be more effective and accountable, exploring the potential of new technologies, creating consortia and networks to link different efforts, building educational bridges with Israel and developing close ties with private foundations.

Although the extent of our achievements over the past ten years is substantial, it is clear that we face a long-term crisis in the area of Jewish identity and affiliation and that Jewish education represents our most important weapon in mobilizing to face this broad challenge. In order to be the most effective organization it can be, JESNA faces the challenge of determining its own priorities and focusing its activities. JESNA cannot continue to try to be "all things to all people." It must begin thinking about future directions. As a result, we have begun a strategic planning process, the outcome of which will determine how we can better serve the Federation and education communities. I look forward to reporting the results of the committee's proceedings in the months ahead.



## MANDEL RECEIVES FIRST MESORAH AWARD

Morton L. Mandel of Cleveland has been named the first winner of the Mesorah Award for Jewish Educational Leadership. Mandel, a prominent leader in Jewish communal life in North America and internationally, will receive this award from JESNA, the Jewish Education Service of North America, at its Continental Leadership Conference on Jewish Education, June 9-11, in Cleveland.

"Over the last decade," stated JESNA President Neil Greenbaum in announcing the award, "no one in the world has done more to advance the cause of Jewish education than Mort Mandel. JESNA inaugurated this award to dramatize the critical role that lay leaders play in supporting and promoting quality Jewish education. We could not have chosen a better exemplar of the impact that one leader can have than Mr. Mandel."

Mandel currently serves as Chair of the Council for Initiatives in Jewish Education, a new entity designed to spearhead Jewish educational renewal and development in North America. The Council is an outgrowth of the Commission on Jewish Education in North America, a body that Mandel also chaired, and which his family's Foundation co-sponsored. Previously, Mandel chaired the JCC Association's Commission on Maximizing the Jewish Educational Effectiveness of Jewish Community Centers and the Jewish Education Committee of the Jewish Agency for Israel.

"It is no accident that Mort Mandel has been at the head of each of these ventures," said Bennett Yanowitz, JESNA's immediate past president. "He has recognized that insuring the quality and vitality of Jewish life for the future is perhaps the most important role of Jewish leadership today. And he has had the courage, wisdom,

skill and determination to convince others to join him in carrying out this responsibility."

Mandel has been extensively involved in supporting Jewish education philanthropically as well as organizationally. The Mandel Associated Foundations have endowed a chair in Jewish education at the Hebrew University and recently established the Mandel Institute for the Advanced Study and Development of Jewish Education, located in Jerusalem.

In addition to his contributions to Jewish education, Mandel has occupied many of the highest leadership positions in the North American Jewish community, including the presidencies of the Council of Jewish Federations and the JWB (currently, the JCC Association). He is also a past president of the Jewish Community Federation of Cleveland and the United Way of Cleveland. He has received numerous awards and honors, including honorary degrees from Brandeis University, Hebrew Union College, and Gratz College.

Mandel is the first recipient of the Mesorah Award, which was established by the Board of Directors of JESNA last Fall. "Mesorah" is a Hebrew word for "tradition," and comes from a root meaning "to transmit." "This is what Jewish education is about: transmitting our tradition from generation to generation," stated Greenbaum. "Through this award, we intend to draw attention both to the men and women who have made a difference for Jewish education and to the fact that leadership in Jewish education merits the highest honor and approbation that we can provide."

The Award will be given annually to honor a lay leader (or leaders) who has made an outstanding contribution to Jewish education, locally, continentally, or internationally.

## Continental Conference Convenes In Cleveland

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outstanding presenters at the conference are Gary Tobin, Walter Ackerman, Barry Chazan and Jonathan Woocher. Charles Ratner of Cleveland serves as Conference chair. Program committee co-chairs are Barton Z. Cowan of Pittsburgh and Sandra Brown of Toronto.

JESNA president, Neil Greenbaum, reflecting on the participation of Cardin, Mandel and Greenberg, commented, "Having Shoshana Cardin and Mort Mandel as the keynote speakers and Yitz Greenberg as Scholar at this conference on Jewish education, conveys a clear message that Jewish education, as a major area of concern, has finally emerged at the top of the communal agenda. There is no challenge more critical to the future of the Jewish people in the decades ahead and into the 21st century than strengthening our educational system."

The Continental Leadership Conference is the culmination of a series of four regional conferences co-sponsored by JESNA in cooperation with the Federations and central agencies for Jewish education across the continent over the past two years.



Rabbi Irving Greenberg

## JESNA Receives Wexner Grant

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Resources Development for JESNA, will supervise the study. Two consultants, Carmi Schwartz, representing the field of Jewish communal service and Dr. Leslie Koltai, the area of executive management for education and the not-for-profit sector, have been engaged to conduct the study and will formulate detailed recommendations.

Following completion of the planning process, it is anticipated that a training program will be initiated to prepare a group of outstanding young leaders to assume executive positions in the three fields.



# Council for Initiatives Mobilizes for Action

"We know what has to be done. Now we have to make it happen." With this sentiment as its watchword, the newly formed **Council for Initiatives in Jewish Education (CIJE)** is beginning its work to facilitate and guide the implementation of the recommendations of the Commission on Jewish Education in North America.

The Commission, chaired by Morton L. Mandel, completed its activities in November with the issuance of its report, **A Time to Act**. The report called for a multi-pronged, decade-long effort to revitalize Jewish education in North America, focusing on two "building blocks": building the profession of Jewish education and mobilizing community support. To flesh out and oversee the initiatives outlined in the Commission report, including the establishment of three to five "lead communities" that will serve as educational laboratories, the Commission created the Council for Initiatives.

The CIJE, chaired by Mr. Mandel and directed professionally by Stephen Hoffman, Executive Vice President of the Jewish Community Federation of Cleveland, will function as a catalyst and convener of the many agencies and organizations that will be involved in implementing the Commission's recommendations. Its board consists of distinguished communal and religious leaders, and it draws on the professional counsel of a broadly based group of educators who form a Senior Policy Advisors group. Dr. Shulamith Elster, currently Headmaster of the Charles E. Smith Day School, has accepted the position of Chief Educational Officer of the CIJE, and will assume that position on a full-time basis in July.

The initial agenda of the CIJE focuses on three major areas:

1. selecting and beginning work with the "lead communities," each of which will be engaged in a comprehensive local process of planning and program development;
2. designing strategies for building the profession of Jewish education, with a special emphasis on pre- and in-service training of educators; and
3. building a research capability and agenda to support the ongoing efforts to strengthen Jewish education locally and continentally.

The institutional partners in the Commission on Jewish Education, JESNA, the JCC Association and CJF, are all working closely with the CIJE and will play key roles in the implementation process. Neil Greenbaum, JESNA's President, serves as one of the vice-chairs of the CIJE.

## HONORABLE Menschen

It is not often that a group or organization can boast of having among its adherents a person of the quality and caliber of Mandell (Bill) Berman. Throughout his long career providing leadership on the local, national and international scene, he has been and remains an ardent advocate of Jewish education.

Bill recently completed his term as president of the Council of Jewish Federations, leaving a legacy of outstanding leadership. For many years prior to his rise to that position, he served as chair of the National Governing Council of the American Association for Jewish Education (AAJE), JESNA's forerunner, and through its reorganization into JESNA in 1981. He was personally instrumental in moving the new agency to a place of recognition during those early years and continues to be so today.

In his hometown of Detroit, Bill served as president of its Jewish Federation, the Agency for Jewish Education (formerly United Hebrew Schools), served as an officer of Congregation Shaarey Zedek, and was honored with the Jewish community's Butzel Award. Among his most enduring achievements in

Detroit was the creation of the J.E.F.F. program — Jewish Education for Families. Recognizing the importance for families to identify with Judaism at home and in their everyday lives, Bill conceived of and was the benefactor for this program, first in his synagogue then through its development into an interagency community program. The J.E.F.F. program, which has received national recognition and serves as a model to hundreds of other institutions, could not have happened without Bill.

Bill has also been recognized on the international scene, serving on the Executive of the Jewish Agency for Israel and its Board of Governors. He was recently appointed to the Joint Authority for Jewish-Zionist Education, the new coordinating body for educational activities in the Diaspora of the Jewish Agency and the World Zionist Organization.

Last year JESNA named Bill as the agency's first honorary chair, in recognition of his ceaseless dedication and commitment to Jewish education. Bill — may you transmit to all who follow in your footsteps the warmth, enthusiasm and devotion that is so much a part of you. **Ya'asher Koach!**



Mandell Berman



# Jewish-Zionist Education Under a New Umbrella

The Joint Authority for Jewish-Zionist Education, the new institutional framework for coordinating the educational activities for the Diaspora of the Jewish Agency for Israel and World Zionist Organization, has begun its work in Jerusalem. The Commission, which serves as the Authority's governing body and is comprised of eighteen representatives each from the UIA-Keren Hayesod and the WZO, held its first meeting in February.

At that meeting, the Commission approved a twelve-person Executive and the appointment of Dr. David Harman as the Authority's Director General. Dr. Harman completed his undergraduate work at Hebrew University and received his doctorate in education from Harvard. Co-chairs of the Commission are Simcha Dinitz and Irwin Field.

The Commission approved and submitted to the JAFI Board of Governors the first operating budget for the Authority which includes, in one framework, expenditures previously in the separate budgets of the Jewish Agency and WZO. For the remainder of the 1991 calendar year, the budget will be approximately \$24 million, though the regular annual budget, including program income, will approach \$50 million.

The establishment of the Joint Authority represents the culmination of several years of negotiation among the partners in the Jewish Agency. It is designed to produce a more coordinated and efficient institutional mechanism for planning and conducting the extensive Jewish-Zionist educational programs in Israel and the Diaspora that are funded and/or carried out by the Agency and WZO. An important feature of the Joint Authority plan is the incorporation of regional advisory groups designed to provide input to the Commission regarding regional needs and program effectiveness.

JESNA, as part of its work as the organized Jewish community's liaison to Israeli and world educational bodies, has been actively involved both in Israel and in the U.S. in seeking to shape the Authority as an effective instrument for better serving the educational needs of the North American Jewish community. Three JESNA Board members, Mandell Berman, Billie Gold and Andrew Groveman sit on the Commission, the latter two as designated regional representatives.

Over the months ahead it is expected that the Authority will begin to examine a variety of issues relating to the goals and means of Jewish-Zionist education worldwide, and to begin to develop a systematic plan for how the resources of the Jewish Agency and WZO can be most effectively deployed to support these educational endeavors.



## Soviet Jewish Holiday Kits Available



Russian language educational Jewish Holiday Kits for Soviet Jewish immigrants are now available through JESNA.

The first kit offered was for Passover. Others focus on Israel Independence Day, Holocaust Memorial Day, High Holidays and Sukkot. Throughout 1991-92, kits on Purim, Shavuot, Shabbat, Bar Mitzvah, Jerusalem Day and Chanukah will be made

available. Each contains several audio and video tapes, comprehensive informational booklets, song books, posters, children's books, stories and activities for children and the family. Each kit is delivered in its own carrying case.

"This is a valuable aid to help introduce Soviet Jews to the world of Jewish holidays and culture," says Yuli Edelstein, former Prisoner of Zion and Jewish educator. Edelstein, now a staff member at the Jerusalem office of Melitz, supervised the production of the kits from start to finish. Working with a staff of both native Israeli and Soviet Jewish educators, Edelstein stated that efforts were made to insure that "the information is presented in a pluralistic manner, creatively presenting the various stories, customs, traditions and culture of the Jewish holidays."

The educational materials were developed in Israel by Melitz Centers for Jewish-Zionist Education, for the Joint Distribution Committee (JDC). The original Passover kit was commissioned by the JDC last year in order to bring explanatory holiday materials to the Soviet Union. In response to the growing need for such materials in the U.S. and Canada, the JDC granted distribution rights to JESNA and Melitz which are now offering the materials with an English introduction and table of contents to Jewish communities in North America.

For more information about the Jewish Holiday Kit series, contact Zvi Levran at JESNA.



## On The Road



Jonathan Woocher gave keynote at **Philadelphia CAJE** conference on supplementary schooling...major address at **Montreal JEC** event, "Celebrating Excellence in Jewish Education"...spoke about the Mandel Commission report at the JEA annual conference in **Stamford** and at the Federation board and BJE forum in **South Jersey**...spoke to Jewish education committees and commissions in **New Orleans, North Jersey, Richmond, St. Louis** and **St. Paul**...spoke to Federation board in Chicago about national developments in Jewish education...spoke at **MetroWest JEA** symposium on Jewish education...spoke to Wexner Israel Fellows in **Boston**...spoke at **Solomon Schechter Day School Conference** on Soviet Jewish acculturation.... attended meetings of the JAFI/WZO Joint Authority and JAFI Jewish Education Committee in Israel.

Paul Flexner, Director of Human Resources Development, conducted Major Issues in Jewish Education Seminar in **Springfield, MA**...consulted with the **New York BJE** search committee in its quest for a new executive vice president...was keynote speaker at **North Jersey Federation Teacher Recognition** program and gave seminars for lay and professional leaders...led seminar at Melton Senior Educators annual alumni conference in **Philadelphia**...met with professional staff at **San Francisco BJE**.

Arthur Vernon, Director of Educational Resources, was keynote speaker at **Winnipeg BJE** Institute for Adult Jewish Studies...gave workshop on the responsibilities of synagogues for Jewish identity at seminar for synagogue lay leaders at **Bergen County JES** and **North Jersey Federation**...participated in a forum at camping seminar at the **New York UJA-Federation**...consulted with **New York UJA-Federation** Distribution Subcommittee on Jewish Education.

David Shluker, Director of Community Consultation and Planning, visited **Palm Springs** and **Philadelphia** for day school consultations for Federation...conducted a study in **Des Moines** on integrating the community day school with the Bureau of Jewish Living... consulted with **Louisville** and **New Orleans** regarding mergers... consulted with **Richmond** on Federation allocation methodologies...consulted with **Chicago Federation** and **BJE** on strategic planning... met with **MetroWest Federation** day school allocations committee.... gave workshop at JESNA conference in **Atlanta** on "Effective School Research"...spoke at Jewish Community Day School (RAVSAK) Annual Conference on the philosophy and teaching of pluralism....served on Yeshiva University Strategic Planning Committee for Jewish Education.



## COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHTS

### Personnel:

The following were named to serve as central agency executive directors: New York-Rabbi Don Well... Philadelphia-Helene Tigay... Rhode Island-Rabbi Arnold Samlan.

Dr. Jeffrey Schein was appointed as a professor at the Cleveland College of Jewish Studies... Dr. Howard Rosenblatt was chosen as executive director of the communal day school, Solomon Schechter Academy of Dallas.

### Planning:

The Commission on the Jewish Future of **Los**

## Early Childhood Seminar to be Held in Israel

A unique opportunity for early childhood educators in Jewish settings, enabling them to renew personal ties to Israel while engaging in their own professional development, will be taking place this summer.

JESNA, in partnership with the JCC Association, is planning a 16-day program in Israel, July 14-29, 1991.

The Seminar is designed to enrich the professional, communal and personal development of the educators. Participants will have the opportunity to deepen their understanding of the Jewish experience and of Israel, as well as to study philosophical issues and concerns in early childhood education.

The seminar is the second in the series of professional development seminars in Israel, made possible by a grant from the Joint Program for Jewish Education of the State of Israel - Ministry of Education and Culture, the Jewish Agency for Israel, and the World Zionist Organization in coordination with the Education Departments of the WZO.

For further information contact Caren Levine at the JESNA office.



**Angeles** issued a report entitled *If We Don't Act Now*, representing work carried out by the Commission since 1988... **St. Louis** recently established a Commission on Jewish Education and a Day School Council... the new Commission for Jewish Education of the **Palm Beaches** recently issued a report on Jewish educational planning... the Study Committee of the **Detroit** Jewish Federation recently issued a final report of its work... The **Boston** Commission on Jewish Continuity continues its data gathering and deliberations and will be preparing its report soon.



## Department of Educational Resources and Services

Working closely with the people who make Jewish education happen is the exciting and challenging role of the Department of Educational Resources and Services. Every day, department Director **Rabbi Art Vernon**, Educational Resources and Services Coordinator **Caren Levine**, and **Zvi Levran**, Coordinator of Israel and Zionist Education, interact with colleagues in schools, central agencies, Federations, national agencies and other settings. Striving to improve the quality of Jewish education, they are always available to provide resources and information. They advise and guide the various networks which JESNA supports, assist in organizing meetings and developing joint projects. Often, special relationships develop between staff and network members. For example, Art particularly enjoys his involvement with **RAVSAK**, the **Jewish Community Day School Network**. "Assisting RAVSAK in obtaining and developing a curriculum project grant from the **Jim Joseph Foundation** has been both a challenge and a delight," Art declares.

Providing information about programs on the "cutting edge" is a primary activity of the Department. An essential part of Caren's work is gathering resources and materials throughout the world and sharing them with constituents. Identifying and evaluating media materials is her forte, whether for early childhood, special education or Soviet Jewish acculturation resources. "The current uses of media to educate Jews of all ages is exciting, and the opportunity to review the constant stream of new developments adds to that excitement," says Caren.

Zvi Levran, *shaliach* to JESNA and North American representative of Melitz, the Israel-based Centers for Jewish Zionist Education, brings the message of a living

Israel to his work. A native of the New York area, he hopes the curriculum project of the **Teaching of Israel Network** will enable North American Jews "to openly and honestly engage the real Israel and determine its significance for themselves and their communities."



Art Vernon



Caren N. Levine



Zvi Levran

Gathering information is sometimes a joint effort with other departments, as with the publication of the recent **Digest of Soviet Jewish Acculturation Initiatives**. Two periodicals of the Department are widely circulated, **Media Meida**, twice yearly for media and resource

centers, producers and professionals, and **The Pedagogic Reporter**, three times a year for a broad audience of Jewish education lay and professional leadership. **Hora'at Yisrael**, a newsletter on the teaching of Israel, is a recent product of the Department.

Bringing people together, whether lay or professional, is another rewarding department activity. At Regional Leadership Conferences conducted over the past two years, annually at the General Assembly of CJF and at special meetings, Jewish education leaders consider ways of enhancing Jewish education through new approaches and programs. Other active projects of the department include Hebrew language instruction in day schools and adult Jewish learning.

With its broad agenda, the staff derives tremendous satisfaction in continuously providing information and guidance. The richness of Jewish education is the currency which the staff circulates with enthusiasm throughout North America.

## Dr. Alvin Schiff Retiring from New York BJE

After 20 years of dynamic leadership, Alvin I. Schiff, the *Ish* (the Hebrew acronym for his name, meaning "man") of Jewish education, with a world-wide reputation as the pre-eminent Jewish communal educator, will be leaving his position as executive vice president of the Board of Jewish Education of Greater New York.

Known by many affectionately as "Alvin," Dr. Schiff has been officially

associated with JESNA in a variety of ways over the years. He is currently, and had been at various times in the past, a member of the JESNA Board, now serving on the Department of Community Consultation Sub-committee. He is a member of the National Board of License (NBL) administered by JESNA, and Chair of the Board's Principal's Certification Committee. He also served as a member of the

Shteinshleifer Testing Bureau Advisory Committee.

We know that Alvin's retirement will not remove him from the scene, but will give him greater opportunity to serve the Jewish community in general and Jewish education in particular.

We at JESNA thank him for his efforts on our behalf and wish him health and success in the future as he goes from "strength to strength."



## APPELMAN, COHN AND SIMON NAMED

### First Covenant Award Recipients

(Continued from pg. 1)

creator of the Jewish Experiences For Families (J.E.F.F.) program. She says of her work: "...I believe Family Education is what merges the values of the educational institution and the home, and that without this merger, Jewish education is futile... I am anxious to find more ways of teaching Jewish values to parents and their children and of empowering parents to teach their children these values by themselves."

Cohn, who has been teaching in the Jewish community for over forty years, still finds satisfaction in being a classroom teacher. As a model teacher who trains others, she reflects, "... The most successful teachers are those who are active in the Jewish community, who study, who advocate for their students, who support their students, who love, who demand from and who touch their students."

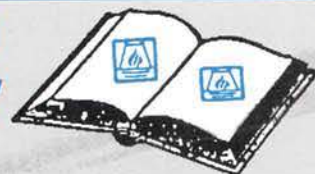
Simon, known internationally as a powerful advocate for Jewish special education, comments, "... I was troubled that people of all ages with disabilities were not treated with greater sensitivity, in violation of the Jewish value of dignity and sanctity of all God's creations."

Says Susan Crown, president of the Arie and Ida Crown Memorial and a Covenant Foundation board member, "We thank these extraordinary educators for their wonderful work in perpetuating the Jewish heritage. They are an inspiration to the entire Jewish community."

The idea for the creation of the Covenant Foundation springs from the family's third generation in America. Mostly in their thirties, with young families, this generation is vitally concerned with the future of Jewish life in North America. They hope that

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## JESNA Issues Improved and Expanded Directory of Central Agencies



In an effort to facilitate communication and networking among professionals in central agencies for Jewish education in North America, and to provide a handy reference regarding communal coordinating bodies for Jewish education, JESNA has expanded its annual **Directory of Central Agencies**. In addition to listing the 62 central agencies and community schools that perform central agency functions (with their addresses, phone and FAX numbers, executive directors and presidents), the 1990-91 edition has several new sections. Directories of central agency staff, organized by community and cross-referenced by job category and professional responsibilities, have been added. A guide to the types of communal coordinating bodies for Jewish education (e.g., autonomous central agency, Federation

committee or commission, community school, resource center) existing in each of the 200 federated Jewish communities in North America, has also been added.

The final section contains a directory of JESNA staff along with descriptions of their primary responsibilities. It is hoped that the directory will make it easier for those involved in Jewish education on the communal level to be in touch with their colleagues and peers, to identify resources, and to share information and knowledge.

The **Directory of Central Agencies** has been distributed to all central agencies in North America. Single copies are available from JESNA's Director of Operations, David Shriner-Cahn for \$10.00. Special rates are available for multiple copies.

## Special Education Colloquium

The Consortium of Special Educators in Central Agencies for Jewish Education recently convened its fifth Annual Colloquium in Cleveland. Hosted by the Cleveland Bureau of Jewish Education, the Colloquium was chaired by Ellen Fishman, the Special Education Coordinator of the BJE. In addition to JESNA's special liaison Caren Levine, representatives from Chicago, Houston, Atlanta, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington DC, Rochester, Akron, Cleveland, MetroWest, NJ and New York City participated.

Dr. Charles J. O'Malley, former Executive Assistant to Private Education, United States Department of Education, delivered the keynote presentation. Dr. O'Malley addressed the issue of advocating for government support of non-public school special education programs, a point of primary concern in the field. Dr. David A. Rothner of the Cleveland Clinic Foundation spoke on neurological aspects of learning disabilities and attention deficit disorders.

In another session, Rabbi Shalom Ziskind and Mona Senkfor of Cleveland discussed the relationship between schools and the BJE in delivering special needs services to students. How central agency staff interacts with lay leadership in the development of special needs programs, was also discussed by Myrtle Silverman, chair of the BJE's Special Education Advisory Committee and Ms. Fishman.

The Consortium, in affiliation with JESNA, is composed of special needs consultants throughout North America who work in central agencies for Jewish education. In addition to the Colloquia and other networking activities, the Consortium publishes a Newsletter which is distributed to central agencies and Federations.



## In Memorium....

*"I spent a number of years working at JESNA with Rabbi Mordecai Lewittes. I enjoyed knowing him as colleague and friend. Especially enjoyable were the hours we spent together 'brown-bagging' our lunch and solving the problems of the world. Our discussions ran far afield. Mordecai was knowledgeable in many areas. After solving problems related to Jewish education we turned to the problems of world politics. He was adept at them all.*

*Mordecai was warm, friendly and sensitive. He felt for people and showed much concern for individuals, 'Ohev et habriot um 'kervan la Torah'.*

*He truly personified the concept of a gentleman and a scholar. He will be missed."* Hy Pomerantz

*(Editor's note: Dr. Lewittes, editor of The Pedagogic Reporter for many years, passed away unexpectedly last November. Dr. Pomerantz, now retired, was Director of Human Resources Development for JESNA and its predecessor agency, the American Association for Jewish Education.)*

## First Interagency Acculturation Conference

Over 80 individuals from 41 communities attended the first interdisciplinary national conference ever held for professionals to assist them in providing Jewish acculturation services for Soviet Jewish emigres. Held in Chicago in May, the conference was co-sponsored by JESNA, the Association of Jewish Family and Children's Agencies, Council of Jewish Federations, HIAS, JCC Association, NYANA, the Chicago Federation and its Board of Jewish Education, Associated Talmud Torahs, Jewish Family and Community Service, and Jewish Community Centers.

The multiple sponsorship of the conference conveyed the message that successful Jewish acculturation requires interagency cooperation in service planning and delivery. Featured speakers included Dr. Stephen Nasatir, Executive Vice President of the Chicago Federation, Dr. Barry Kosmin, Director of Research of the Council of Jewish Federations and Rabbi Yehiel Poupko, Director of Judaic Programs of the Chicago JCCs. Dr. Misha Galperin, a former

emigre and Immigration Affairs Specialist for the New York Federation Employment and Guidance Service, served as Conference Guide.

As they shared experiences across disciplines while exploring common issues, participants reflected the diversity of communities and agencies involved with Soviet Jewish acculturation. The conference was successful in achieving its goals which were to begin the networking of information and experiences, improve the understanding of Soviet emigres, and to develop new acculturation approaches while considering the role of American Jews in that process.

Jewish educators in attendance represented central agencies, day schools and congregational schools. Through a new committee co-chaired by JESNA Board member Dr. Jerry Friedman of Los Angeles and Rachel Greenbaum, past president of the Chicago Board of Jewish Education, JESNA is exploring possible approaches by which to continue providing Jewish acculturation information and services to communities across the country.

## Bureau Executives Hold Seminar in Israel

For the first time in twenty years, executive directors from the Boards and Bureaus of Jewish Education in North America held an intensive seminar in Israel. Representing the Bureau Directors Fellowship, ten men and women met with representatives of the World Zionist Organization, the Department of Education of the State of Israel and many leading educational institutions in Israel to discuss our common agenda.

From the initial meeting at the Mevaseret Zion Absorption Center to the private meeting with the Minister of Education, Zvulun Hammer, the group had the opportunity to learn about the unique activities and resources in Israel that can contribute to their work as Jewish educators in North America.

Under the able guidance of the seminar coordinator, Dr. David Resnick, JESNA's Israel Representative, and Paul A. Flexner, Director of Human Resources Development, the group participated in a series of personal and professional learning experiences and, at the same time, brought a strong message of support to the people of Israel. Co-chairs of the seminar were Dr. Gerald Teller of Chicago and Shlomo Shimon of Montreal.

Participating in the Seminar were Dr. Arnold Carmel and Jack Cipilinski of Winnipeg; Dr. Joshua Chorowsky of Milwaukee; Dr. Sandra Sterling Epstein of Mercer/Bucks Counties (NJ and PA); Ruth Gavish of Portland; Dr. Emanuel Goldman of Baltimore; Dr. Emil Jacoby of Los Angeles; Dr. Larry Kutler of Youngstown; Harvey Raben of Toledo; and Shlomo Shimon of Montreal.

(Continued on pg. 10)



Central agency executive directors at seminar in Israel pictured with David Resnick and Paul Flexner.



## BRIEFLY SPEAKING . . .

Educators from nine members of the Jewish Community Day School Network, **RAVSAK**, met in Los Angeles recently to begin developing a Shabbat curriculum for grades K-8, reflecting the transideological approach of community day schools. The project is funded by a grant from the Jim Joseph Foundation through the Minneapolis Jewish Day School and guided by JESNA's Department of Educational Services and Resources.

From the period beginning with JESNA's current fiscal year, September 1, 1990, to **April 30, 1991**, the **Friends Campaign** raised \$50,395. We look forward to exceeding last fiscal year's total of \$58,000.

JESNA, CJF the JCC Association and the Weiner Center of New York UJA-Federation have created the **Jewish Recruitment Advisory Committee. JRAC** organizes the recruitment process for attracting future Jewish communal professionals.

JESNA staff members Leora Isaacs, Caren Levine, Zvi Levran, and intern Lani Derby, are organizing the Israeli Pavilion for the forthcoming CAJE Conference at Hofstra University on Long Island, August 18-22. The Pavilion will serve as the central landmark for exchange of information on Israel-related educational initiatives.

JESNA's **Adult Jewish Learning Task Force** recently met to review data gathered from 17 national agencies and 11 communities regarding programs and activities in adult Jewish learning. By integrating the data with elements of the current condition, the Task Force hopes to create a vision of adult Jewish learning for the future. Co-chaired by Miriam Yenkin of Columbus and JESNA vice president, Dr. Lois Zachary of Syracuse, the Task Force will present its recommendations and final report at the CJF General Assembly in Baltimore next November.

JESNA is pleased to have received a bequest for \$5000 from the estate of Harold E. Hirsch of New York.

### Bureau Executives Hold Seminar

(Continued from pg. 9)

Reflecting upon the experience, Harvey Raben expressed a sentiment echoed by all the participants: "It was extremely valuable to me. It brought me closer than ever to Israel and helped me focus on the critical nature of the Diaspora/Israel relationship."

The Seminar was the first of three that JESNA is sponsoring during the next two years under a grant from the Joint Program for Jewish Education of the Jewish Agency, the World Zionist Organization and the State of Israel Ministry of Education and Culture.

(Left to right)  
Zvulun  
Hammer,  
Israel's  
Minister of  
Education and  
David Resnick,  
JESNA's Israel  
representative,  
at Bureau  
Directors'  
Seminar.



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# FALLACIES and FACTS

**FALLACY:** *The majority of Jewish children in North America will receive no Jewish education during their lifetimes.*

**FACT:** Enrollment in some type of formal Jewish education is a normative experience for Jewish children in North America. Although there is some variation from community to community, between 70-80% of America's Jews receive some kind of Jewish education during their lifetimes. However, at any given time, only about 35-40% of the potential student population (ages 5-18) is enrolled in Jewish schools. The pre-Bar/Bat Mitzvah years continue to be the most intense period, at approximately 57%. Enrollment rates decline to approximately 27% in grades 8-10, and further to approximately 6% in grades 11-12. Thus, the majority of Jewish children do receive some Jewish education experiences though many are enrolled for an exceedingly short duration.

**FALLACY:** *Enrollment in Jewish schools is declining precipitously.*

**FACT:** Contrary to conventional wisdom, the percentage of children enrolled at any point in time (35-40%) has not varied significantly within the last 40 years. There have been, however, significant fluctuations in the absolute numbers of children enrolled in Jewish schools. From the peak of 589,000 students in 1957, enrollment fell to 372,000 in 1982.

This decrease was primarily due to an overall population decline resulting from low birthrates and rising intermarriage rates. (Although enrollment rates for children born from conversionary marriages are comparable to those in which both parents were born Jewish, only 20% from mixed marriages are enrolled.)

## Improving Jewish Schools Leadership Conference in Atlanta

Only when parents, school board members and professional educators are able to compare outcomes between districts and individual schools will the promise of educational reform be achievable, according to Dr. Chester E. Finn, Jr., former Assistant Secretary of Education who keynoted JESNA's Southern Regional Leadership Conference in Atlanta. The Conference focused on how to promote greater effectiveness and accountability in Jewish education while acknowledging that Jewish education may be different in some respects from general education. Finn challenged the Conference

participants, representing 17 different communities, to pay more attention to outcomes as the evidence of success in education.

Conference workshops and sessions dealt with relationships between and among Federations, schools, central agencies for Jewish education, national denominational bodies, and various approaches and methods for increasing effectiveness and accountability. Conference Guide, Dr. Adrienne S. Bank, cautioned participants regarding single dimension approaches. "Accountability is a process," she argued, "requiring involvement of all stakeholders, clear goals and

evaluation of outcomes."

Participants returned to their home communities armed with new information about the process of accountability and with greater understanding of the need for developing strategies to measure success in our Jewish schools.



The recent "echo" occasioned by children of "baby boomers" reaching school age has been reflected in Jewish school enrollments. Results of the most recent census of Jewish schools conducted during the school years 1986-1988, indicate that the numbers enrolled in formal Jewish education programs through secondary school, including between 50-70,000 in early childhood education programs, have risen again to over 470,000. Though it is a lower number than during the peak period, the percentage of market penetration remains constant at 35-40%.

**FALLACY:** *The growth of the day school movement has reached a plateau.*

**FACT:** Both the number of day schools and their enrollments increased between 1982 and 1987. The Second Census of Jewish Schools in North America reports 450 day schools in 1982, compared to 530 in 1987. Day school enrollment, reported at 103,000 in 1982, reached nearly 169,000 in 1987. More importantly, the percentage of students enrolled in Jewish schools rose from 27.8% to 36.8% between 1982 and 1987.



(Left to right) Neil Greenbaum, JESNA President; Lois Fox, JESNA Assistant Secretary; Chester E. Finn, Jr., Keynote; Dr. Adrienne Banks, Conference Guide; Gerald Cohen, Atlanta, Conference Chair.



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

(Continued from pg. 2)

exposing themselves and their children to personal danger away from their families. (Ironically, during the war itself, the ability of the news media to convey what was happening in Israel in "real time," i.e., as it occurred, may have allowed us in North America to feel more involved as the missiles fell than our distant — and safe — vantage point really justified.) And, let us not forget, during this same period, North American Jews raised unprecedented sums for Operation Exodus. Nor during the crisis were our educational institutions inactive. Several central agencies for Jewish education and numerous other groups mobilized quickly to develop programs and materials dealing with the war and its impact upon Israel.

Nevertheless, the experience of the last few months has graphically confirmed what surveys over the past several years have shown: there is a visible and potentially serious erosion in the identification of American Jews with Israel, and a reciprocal doubt growing among Israelis about the seriousness and depth of our commitment to Israel when the chips are down.

This fact sets a challenge for Jewish education that must not be brushed aside. Although studies have established that Israel does play a role in the educational program of virtually all Jewish schools and organizations, there is both empirical and widespread impressionistic evidence that this role is far from central and may be diminishing. For the past several years, JESNA and a number of central agencies of Jewish education have been working to revise what is to our knowledge the only comprehensive, multi-year curriculum for the teaching of Israel in Diaspora schools, a curriculum originally developed by the Melton Centre for Jewish Education at the Hebrew University. Sadly, only a relative handful of schools devote enough time to the teaching of Israel and use such a comprehensive curriculum (although the ones who

do are enthusiastic about it). Among the many competing and worthy subjects vying for inclusion in our curricula, the teaching of Israel often is simply not high enough on the list of priorities.

The picture, however, is far from entirely bleak. Increasingly, educators and community leaders are coming to recognize that an experience in Israel may be the single most powerful Jewish educational experience that a young person (or adult) can undergo. Many agencies, community organizations, and private foundations have made the expansion and qualitative enrichment of "the Israel experience" a priority in their educational strategies.

We at JESNA believe that building a powerful identification with and understanding of Israel is a vital component of any sound Jewish education. A serious encounter with Israel, both through formal study and (especially) through participation in an educational program in Israel, is critical in shaping one's individual identity as a Jew, one's appreciation of Jewish history, tradition and values, and one's commitment to Jewish peoplehood and our shared responsibilities.

The lesson of the past eight months is that we must work to bring Israel back from the margins of our experience as American Jews closer to the center. This does not mean negation of our own experience, concerns, and achievements as Diaspora Jews. Nor does it mean seeking to inculcate an uncritical "Israelolatry" in our students. But Israel must be a more persistent focus of our educational attention than it has been in many of our schools and organizations.

JESNA is and will be very much a part of this effort. Through our Israel representative in Jerusalem and our coordinator of Israel and Zionist education here in New York, we have been at the forefront of building educational bridges with Israel that strengthen North American Jewish education in a myriad of ways, and also place Israel more prominently on the agenda of

our agencies and institutions.

We all pray that these most recent attacks on Israel are the last, and that Israel will be able to turn its full attention to the historic aliya of Soviet, Ethiopian, and perhaps even North American Jews. But praying for Israel's peace and raising money for its well-being are not enough: We must also make it a presence in our lives and the lives of our children. That is a job for Jewish education.

## First Covenant Award Recipients

(Continued from pg. 8)

Jewish children and adults all over North America will benefit from the results of this endeavor - that more talented people will join the ranks of Jewish educators, that the community will support and reward these individuals, and that the best new programs can be widely disseminated. According to Ms. Crown, the leading force behind the creation of the Covenant Foundation, "We see this Foundation as one of the most important projects, if not the most important one that we have ever worked on."



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### JESNA UPDATE

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President: Neil Greenbaum  
Executive Vice President: Jonathan Woocher  
Editor: Rhea K. Zukerman  
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Feb 15, 1991

Annette Hochstein % Mandel Associated Foundations

Dear Annette,

Fax # 972-2-699951

One is hard pressed to find any advantages to SCUD missiles, but I must admit I was very pleased to receive your edited copy of my paper on Informal Education.

Your editing is splendid and I welcomed your helpful clarification of what I had written. By the way it is amazing to me that slightly  $\frac{1}{2}$  way finished in carefully reviewing the manuscript I have already found 3 typos. I'm also working at responding to what I think are the key issues raised by Seymour. I should finish the task in a few days + I'll quickly ship the finished copy to you via Priority Mail.

Thanks again for your, as usual, competent work.

Regards to Seymour.

Bernie



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התורה למען העתיד  
בצמח אפרים

This fax supercedes the previous fax of this date!

F A X

TO: Annette Hochstein, Mandel Institute  
619951

FROM: David Resnick

DATE: 9 May 93

O.B. 3784 .7.7  
91030 JERUSALEM  
(02) 618718  
FAX: (02) 666-223

Greetings! I'm glad that business brings us back together again so soon.

President  
Neil Greenbaum

First, thanks for sending the multiple copies of the draft supplementary school Best Practices report. The Interns will receive them at our very next meeting.

Executive Vice President  
Jonathan S. Woocher

Second, I'm happy to report that one of our Interns, Jennifer Zwilling, has become interested in working in Jewish education in a federation setting. Your comments about Lead Communities led her to believe that those would be good places for her to begin her contacts. Can you recommend the name of a key person in each of the three communities, especially in the federation, whom Jennifer might be able to contact? Obviously, no obligation from your or the community's side! If you get the information to me, I'll relay it on to Jennifer. Thanks!

Israel Representative  
David Resnick

Third, I'm passing on to you a request I received from Yisrael Ellman. He is writing a booklet (about 100 pages) in Hebrew about the American Jewish community, on behalf of the CJF, for distribution here in Israel. There is a chapter on Jewish education, and I've been helping him as best I can. Obviously, I shared a copy of A Time to Act with him and, thorough person that he is, he inquired about the reports issued by the Commission. I told him I would pass his inquiry along to you. He is very reliable and, if you are short on specific reports to share with him, he is very good about reading material and then returning it. He can be reached at:

Yisrael Ellman  
Kibbutz Yasur  
DN Misgav  
20150

Tel: (04) 960111

That's it! Thanks for all your help, as usual. !נחמתי