

Sunday, October 15, 2006



Evaluation Report 2005-2006

Launched in September 2003, The WCJCC-JDC FSU Mentoring Project has expanded to "light new candles" in nine locations in the FSU. This report outlines recent updates (September 2005-September 2006) and future projections.

September 2005-

Project participants from around the world gathered for a retreat in Haifa to discuss issues pertaining to the project. The feedback was very positive. Participants raised the need to convene again, share experiences and learn from each other. Following the retreat, participants attended the WCJCC 7th Quadrennial Conference together with 350 delegates from 35 countries.

Year Round-

1. Staten Island JCC, New York, USA- Moscow, Russia

Lew Stolzenberg – Executive Director, Staten Island JCC, New York, USA

Irene Stolzenberg- Executive Director, JFVS, New York, USA

In the past: Boris Rubinstein – Executive Director, Nikitskaya JCC, Moscow, Russia

Elena Borisnova- Executive Director, NEOD JCC, Moscow, Russia (focus on families at risk)

Currently: Regina Yoffe- Executive Director, Nikitskaya JCC, Moscow, Russia

May 06- Alik Nadan, JDC Representative for Moscow, attended the JCCA Biennial and visited Staten Island.

May 06-Lew and Irene visited Moscow. In their report outlined some of the current changes in Nikitskaya and Moscow and saw potential in the new administration. Suggested that Regina visits New York in the fall.

Working with Moscow has been a challenge due to the complexities of the Jewish community and the instability of staff and lay leaders. Past reports from Lew and Irene have raised the problems of vision for the JCCs, the Executive Director and other key issues. The last visit has been more positive with identified possibilities for future improvements. As JDC staff struggle with many issues, they would like the mentors to help identify key problems and possible solutions. JDC staff will work closer with mentors in preparation for future visits.

2. Atlanta JCC, Georgia, USA- Minsk, Belarus

Dr. Harry Stern – Executive Director, Marcus JCC of the Atlanta, Georgia, USA
Sofia Filkova – Executive Director, Emunah JCC Minsk, Belarus

December 05- Minsk musicians visit Atlanta and perform.

January 06- Sasha Lampert, director of Minsk institute for training attends a one month professional training in Atlanta.

April 06- Two senior staff from Atlanta JCC visit Minsk along with six teens (second time this exchange takes place.)

May 06- Sonya attended the JCCA Biennial and an extensive visit to Atlanta. She also attended the JDC Executive Directors training course.

July 06- Six Minsk teens and counselor spent one month at the Atlanta JCC summer camp (third time this exchange takes place.)

July 06- Harry has retired and is very interesting in continuing his involvement and contribution to JCCs in the FSU.

The main achievement of this mentorship has been the expansion from working with the Executive Director to involving a wide array of staff and volunteers in both communities. The repeated exchange programs were very real, extensive and in depth. The Atlanta JCC and Jewish Federation added substantive funds to help implement all the exchange programs. Due to Harry's retirement, this is a transition period. Minsk staff will continue working with senior staff of the Atlanta JCC. Once the new Executive Director will be hired, the possible future involvement will be explored (this may take a while.) It is important not to loose the momentum and the achievements of this project during this transition period. In addition, thoughts on how to continue utilizing Harry's commitment to assist FSU will be explored with JDC staff.

3. MATAN, IACC, Israel- Dnepropetrovsk, Ukraine

Uri Strizover – Executive Director, MATAN, IACC, Israel

Galina Radnikov / Alexander Sokolovsky– Current and Former Executive Directors of the Dnepropetrovsk JCC, Ukraine

When Uri began the mentorship he was helpful in identifying the shortcomings of the former director and helped create a new vision for the JCC. Uri concluded his mentorship in 2005. Galina has been a quick learner and has been very successful as the new director. She attended the JDC Executive Directors training course. In recent months, Galina learned English and is very keen on a partnership with a mentor from Boston. There are now attempts to recruit Mark Sokol, the Executive Director of the Boston JCCs, to work with Dnepropetrovsk.

In addition, an initiative of Howard Wasserman and Alex Budnitsky of the Edith and Carl Marks JCC in Benson Hurst New York resulted in a summer camp youth exchange among teens from Dnepropetrovsk, New York and Jerusalem that took place during August and October 2006 and was funded by UJA Federation of New York. JDC and WCJCC staff members were involved in making the initial contacts.

4. MATAN, IACC, Israel- Zaporozhe, Ukraine

Uri Strizover – Executive Director, MATAN, IACC, Israel

Innesa Visenko- Executive Director, JCC of Zaporozhe, Ukraine

Uri's mentorship coincided with opening a new JCC. Uri identified many strengths in Innesa and helped her brainstorm and envision the possibilities for the new site. Uri concluded his mentorship in 2005. In the future, if indeed Mark Sokol will work with Dnepropetrovsk, perhaps Zaporozhe could be added as well.

5. Jewish Care, London, England- Kharkov, Ukraine

Neil Taylor – Deputy Director, Community Services, Jewish Care, London, England

Zhanna Maistrenko – Executive Director, Kharkov JCC, Ukraine

July 05- Neil visited Beit Dan JCC.

February 06- A delegation from the Beit Dan JCC together with Shira Genish, JDC representative, visited London.

June 06- Jerry Makwosky, WCJCC president visited Beit Dan JCC.

October 06- A delegation from the Redbridge JCC of London visits Kharkov.

Neil is planning another visit, November 2006.

The mentorship has been very successful. Very positive changes at the Beit Dan JCC. Partnership has now extended to include the JCC of Redbridge, London. Main results of the program have been: The revision of Beit Dan's goals and objectives as the leading regional JCC, weekly planning sessions for administration and department heads, cooperation among departments and seminar for staff, team building, developing interest clubs, developing a web site, a new concept for a newsletter, new sports program and competitions, age division in youth programs and reorganization of Beit Atid youth programs.

6. Milwaukee JCC, Wisconsin- Kazan JCC, Russia

Jay Roth, Executive Director, Harry and Rose Samson Family JCC, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA

Ana Smolina, Executive Director, Kazan JCC, Russia

December 05- Jay visited Kazan

July 06- Ana and Bellla Zarisky of JDC visited Milwaukee

September 06- Jay visited Kazan

As a second phase mentor, Jay began his mentorship with good preparation tools. He identified, in his first report, the strengths and weaknesses of Ana and the Kazan JCC. After three joint visits, it became apparent that Ana is not willing or capable of extending the Hessed model to a community wide JCC. Ana has requested to end the project. Jay believes that the potential in Kazan is still there and hopes that the

community will evolve in the future. In the meantime, arrangements are now being made for Jay to work with other communities in the region.

7. Neve Yossef, Haifa, Israel, IACC- Tashkent JCC, Uzbekistan

Moshe Hazut, Executive Director, Neve Yossef Community Center, Haifa, Israel, IACC

Alona Van Yu, Executive Director, Tashkent JCC Uzbekistan

January 06- Moshe visited Tashkent

May 06- Alona attended JCCA Biennial and visited New York JCC

As a direct result of the Haifa Conference, this mentorship is off to a great start. Moshe has initiated an extensive process of evaluation and needs assessment in the community while Alona has been very receptive to change and challenge. Due to the war, Moshe's second visit was postponed and will take place shortly.

8. MATAN, IACC, Israel- Tbilissi, Georgia

Uri Strizover – Executive Director, MATAN, IACC, Israel

Iliia Baazov- Director of Cultural Arts, Tbilisi, Georgia

December 05- Uri visited Tbilisi

April 06- Uri visited Tbilisi

October 06- Ilya together with a dance troupe from Tbilisi visit Israel to perform at the Carmiel Dance Festival and in Jerusalem

The common language of cultural arts resulted in a very good chemistry among the partners. Uri and Iliia have been working together on developing a cultural arts/dance center in Tashkent. They have been working on the business model and content areas. The project is coming to life and they will continue working together in the future.

9. Toronto JCC, Canada- Kishinev JCC, Moldova

Sherry Kulman- Executive Director, Toronto JCC, Ontario, Canada

Ilya Shatz- Executive Director, Kedem JCC, Kishinev, Moldova

September 05- New JCC opened. Sherry visited Kishinev

Fall 06- Sherry scheduled to visit Kishinev

After opening the new campus, it took several months for the local staff to get organized and therefore Sherry's visit has been postponed several times. Ilya is ready now and Sherry's second visit will take place shortly.

Main Overall Achievements:

- a. Developing a vision for the JCC
- b. Practical adoption of planning frameworks
- c. Developing new program areas
- d. Developing a client oriented approach
- e. Introducing fees for services and fundraising strategies
- f. Tangible exchange programs
- g. Involvement of other staff members and lay leaders
- h. Involvement in the physical development of the JCC
- i. Developing evaluation tools

Future Overall Goals:

- a. Clarify the role and long term goals of JDC
- b. Develop a framework for continuing the partnership and exchange projects
- c. Build more trust and openness with local staff
- d. Gain a better understanding of local community

Future Projections:

Written and oral reports as well as debriefings with those involved in the project prove that the project answers specific needs and significantly helps the development of JCCs in the FSU. At the same time, it also contributes to the mentor and his/her community a great deal. It clearly develops a sense of shared values and practices and enables to create a sense of Jewish peoplehood based on a model of professional exchange.

Future needs:

1. Continuing the Mentoring Project in relevant cities and adding 2-4 additional locations.
2. Establishing an Association for JCCs in the FSU.
3. Mentoring groups of staff members according to theme. For example, Jewish Renewal Coordinators.
4. Mentoring assistant directors or other personnel within the JCC, going beyond the level of Executive Directors.
5. Consulting JDC staff in issues pertaining to the world of JCCs.

Creating a new model

As a development of the one-on-one mentoring model, perhaps it is time to create teams from several countries who will work together with FSU. For example, in establishing an Association of JCCs, consultants can come from North America, Israel and perhaps also Latin America, where the network represents different countries and languages as in the case of FSU.

Expanding the Mentoring Project

From my discussions with JDC staff it seems that expanding the Mentoring Project will need to overcome some obstacles:

1. Inadequate staff at local JCCs- not all directors are ready or capable of the process. Some JCCs are going through transition periods. Not all JCC directors are ones who will stay long term and are worth the great investment.
2. JDC staff- Not all JDC representatives are ready to take on the project and commit themselves in order for it to succeed. I believe that some of them are not aware of the benefits to the local JCC and are hesitant of what may seem as outside intervention.
3. JDC is looking into consolidating locations in the FSU. Therefore, main cities are either in the project or for one of the above reasons not in the project. Some new possibilities may include Odessa, St. Petersburg, Volga and a model of working with small cities.

Second Project Retreat Planned

In June 2007, a second one week retreat in Israel, coinciding with the conference of the World Council of Jewish Communal Services, will take place. I hope that JDC staff will

be more involved in the discussions as we look into analyzing case studies, exploring issues of cultural differences and sharing achievements and challenges.

I want to take this opportunity and thank all project partners as only the commitment of all participants could ensure the success of the project. I especially want to thank Orna Gerling who has been a key staff person and has personally followed and supported all mentorships, her contribution is invaluable.

Smadar Bar-Akiva

Appendix:

Project Partners “JCCs in the FSU: The Next Generation”

Jane Gellman Chair, WCJCC Board Member, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA

1. Staten Island JCC, New York, USA- Moscow, Russia

Executive Directors and Staff of the Nikitskaya JCC and the NEOD JCC
Lew Stolzenberg – Executive Director, Staten Island JCC, New York, USA
Irene Stolzenberg- Executive Director, JFVS, New York, USA

2. Atlanta JCC, Georgia, USA- Minsk, Belarus

Sofia Filkova – Executive Director, Emunah JCC Minsk, Belarus
Harry Stern – Executive Director, Marcus JCC of the Atlanta, Georgia, USA

3. MATAN, IACC, Israel- Dnepropetrovsk, Ukraine

Galina Radnikov – Executive Directors of the Dnepropetrovsk JCC, Ukraine
Uri Strizover – Executive Director, MATAN, IACC, Israel

4. MATAN, IACC, Israel- Zaporoche, Ukraine

Innesa Visenko- Executive Director, JCC of Zaporoche, Ukraine
Uri Strizover – Executive Director, MATAN, IACC, Israel

5. Jewish Care, London, England- Kharkov, Ukraine

Zhanna Maistrenko – Executive Director, Kharkov JCC, Ukraine
Neil Taylor – Deputy Director, Community Services, Jewish Care, London, England

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Ana Smolina- Executive Director, Kazan JCC Russia
Jay Roth- Executive Director, Harry and Rose Samson Family JCC, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA

7. Neve Yossef, Haifa, IACC, Israel- Tashkent, Uzbekistan

Moshe Hazut- Executive Director, Neve Yossef Community Center, Haifa, IACC, Israel

Alona Van Yu- Executive Director, Tashkent JCC, Uzbekistan

8. Toronto JCC, Canada-Kishinev, Moldova

Sherry Kulman- Executive Director, Toronto JCC, Ontario, Canada

Ilya Shatz- Executive Director, Kedem JCC, Kishinev, Moldova

9. MATAN, IACC, Israel- Tbilisi, Georgia

Uri Strizover – Executive Director, MATAN, IACC, Israel

Ilia Baazov- Director of Cultural Arts, Tbilisi, Georgia

Main JDC staff involved in the project:

Yoram Abergil - Country Director JDC, FSU Department (Israel)

Stanley Abramowitz- Country Director JDC, FSU Department (Israel)

Alik Nadan – City Director JDC, FSU Department (Russia)

Stuart Saffer - Country Director JDC, FSU Department (Israel)

Shaul Dritter- Country Director JDC, FSU Department (Israel)

Shira Genish – JDC Representative, FSU Department (Ukraine)

Jonathan Porath- Country Director, JDC, FSU Department (Israel)

Max Weisel- Country Director, JDC, FSU Department (Israel)

Project Consultants:

Asher Ostrin- Executive Director of the JDC FSU Department (Israel)

Dalia Lev-Sade -JDC, FSU Department (Israel)

Orna Gerling- JDC, FSU Department (Israel)

Alan Mann- Executive Vice President of JCC Association (USA)

Dorit Rom- IACC (Israel)

Project Founders:

Jerry Spitzer President, WCJCC

Ralph Goldman, Past President, WCJCC

Project Director:

Smadar Bar Akiva, Executive Director, WCJCC, Jerusalem, Israel