

WCJCC 2006 Highlights

During 2006, WCJCC was instrumental in serving simultaneously all the JCC networks. Identifying the best of what each region has to offer, JCC leaders served as resources to other JCCs worldwide. WCJCC thus continued to nurture JCC leaders who have a global Jewish perspective and are suited to lead the worldwide JCC movement.

Year Round 2006

"One Candle Lighting Another" the WCJCC/JDC Mentoring/Professional Exchange Project in the Former Soviet Union

Developing a vision for the JCC, practical adoption of planning frameworks, developing new program areas such as youth, developing a client oriented approach, introducing fees for services and fundraising strategies, tangible exchange programs between JCCs, involvement in the physical development of the JCC and developing evaluation tools - were the main achievements of the project which began in the fall of 2003 and is chaired by WCJCC Board Member, **Jane Gellman**. Mentors from North America representing JCC Association, from England representing Jewish Care and from Israel representing the Israel Association of Community Centers worked hand in hand with their peers at JCCs in Moscow, Dnepropetrovsk, Kharkov, Minsk, Tashkent, Kazan, Kishinev and Tbilisi. **Asher Ostrin**, the Director of the FSU Department for JDC, summarized the year by concluding that thanks to WCJCC, JCCs in the FSU were able to be exposed to successful models and successful professionals. "This has made all the difference in the development of FSU JCCs", Asher said.

Year Round 2006

WCJCC Advisory Committee Assesses Needs

Menachem Revivi, chair of the WCJCC Advisory Committee, facilitated several sessions that articulated and evaluated the needs of WCJCC affiliate organizations. Discussions resulted in a request to further develop the worldwide dialogue among affiliate organizations and the need to convene a worldwide think tank of top leaders to establish the WCJCC future agenda.

February 1

Tri Center Project Launched

The charismatic leaders of the Lamrot Hakol Synagogue/JCC in Buenos Aires; French Hill, Jerusalem, Community Center and the Suffolk Y JCCs and Five Towns JCC in Long Island, New York met in Buenos Aires to launch a three year project that is aimed at creating a common bond among members and leaders of the three communities. Following the initial support of WCJCC, a generous grant from UJA Federation of New York was approved in July. This pilot project will hopefully teach us new ways of connecting JCCs on a three way basis, thus breathing life into the concept of Jewish peoplehood.

March 26- April 2

**Ramat Gan Dance Troupe at the
CDI Mexico Aviv Festival**

In an attempt to bring Ramat Gan and Mexico closer together, **Shaul Shani**, IFCC board member, led a 20 member dance troupe to perform at the prestigious Aviv Festival. The visit was made possible thanks to the commitment of all partners and a generous contribution by CDI President and WCJCC Vice President **Marcos Metta Cohen**.

End of April

**Jerry Spitzer attends the opening of the new JCC
in Sofia, Bulgaria**

The small but very active Jewish community of Bulgaria opened a second JCC in the capital of Sofia so that more activities and programs could be offered to the Jewish public. WCJCC Chairman of the Board, **Jerry Spitzer**, who has been instrumental in assisting Jewish communities in Eastern Europe, attended the festive event and proceeded to visit Bucharest where a new JCC is about to open.

May 1

Upgraded WCJCC website: www.wcjcc.org

A new look and elaborated content pages were added to the WCJCC website. One can now find contact information for all 1,100 JCCs, browse the photo gallery and read recent updates and reports. In 2007, the site will be translated into four languages.

May 7-10

**30 WCJCC Delegates attend the JCC Association
Biennial Conference in Philadelphia**

WCJCC delegates from Belarus, France, Germany, Israel, Mexico, Russia and Uzbekistan including WCJCC Vice Presidents: **Yair Geller** of IACC, Israel, and **Abe Lehrer** of ZWST, Germany, attended the JCCA Biennial Conference and the special meetings of the WCJCC track. WCJCC congratulated incoming JCC Association president, **Alan Solow**, as WCJCC Vice President and long time WCJCC honorary board member **Ron Leibow**, upon receiving the Frank L. Weil Award.

May 8

WCJCC Annual Board Meeting, Philadelphia

"The World Confederation is about strengthening the Jewish people, bringing people closer to their tradition and creating a personal Jewish identity" said WCJCC founding president, **Mort Mandel**, when addressing the 45 board members and guests who attended the meeting that was chaired by WCJCC President, **Jerry Makowsky**.

May 10-14

IFCC Delegation visits Mexico

Following an active participation at the JCC Association Biennial, a select group of Israel Federation of Community Centers' leaders visited Mexico City. The delegation learned about Jewish life in Mexico and also visited the CDI.

June 8-10

Study visit to Riga, Latvia

Andrea Solow, WCJCC Board Member, led a WCJCC delegation to the Baltic States in an attempt to understand first hand, the rejuvenation of Jewish life. In Riga, the delegation was hosted by **Victoria Gubatova**, who arranged visits to the Alef JCC and meetings with local Jewish leaders.

June 11-13

WCJCC Co Sponsors the Second European Conference of JCCs in Vilnius, Lithuania

The Second Conference of JCCs in Europe, organized by JDC and ECJC and co-sponsored by WCJCC, brought together 100 Executive Directors from JCCs in Europe. The discussions focused on how to rekindle the impressive Jewish traditions that once permeated world Jewry and how to reach out to new populations. **Alberto Senderey**, JDC Director for Europe and Latin America, urged the participants to continue writing new pages in the European Jewish history book.

June 14-28

WCJCC President Jerry Makowsky, visits Israel, France and the Ukraine

"Walking into the Beit Dan JCC in Kharkov, one could immediately feel the warmth and excitement of a Jewish home, just like in Memphis" were the words of **Jerry Makowsky** when he addressed some 500 members at a JCC end-of-the-year ceremony concluding a two-week visit to affiliate organizations in Israel, France and the Ukraine. In the Ukraine the visit focused on the benefits of the FSU Mentoring/Professional Exchange Project. In France, visits and meetings with FSJU leaders and welcoming **Pierre Besnainou**, as WCJCC vice president, helped focus the common agenda and plan future partnerships. And earlier in Israel, extensive meetings with IACC, IFCC, JAFI and JDC leaders, shed light on the needs and challenges of WCJCC partners.

July – August

WCJCC supports Israel during the war

Materializing the concept that all the people of Israel are responsible for each other, WCJCC Board Members and JCCs all over the world mobilized their resources to help Israel and its people during the difficult times engendered by the war in Lebanon. In Israel, IACC and IFCC worked around the clock to help thousands of families and children cope with the ramifications of the war and spearheaded local efforts. In September, IACC received a special award from the Ministry of Education in great appreciation for their efforts during the war.

August

The Rosalind Gurwin JCC of Dnepropetrovsk and the Edith and Carl Marks JCC of Benson Hurst, Brooklyn, Youth Counselors Exchange

"I felt part of the Jewish family in the Ukraine" said 17 year old **Natasha Spektor**, who participated in the " We Are Family" two year project, that brought young counselors from New York to work at a JDC family camp in the Ukraine. Funded by UJA Federation of New York, the project began when partners met at the WCJCC Haifa Conference and continued to find ways of connecting the Russian speaking community of the Marks JCH with Dnepropetrovsk.

October 8-16

Tbilisi JCC Dance troupe performs in Israel

Non-stop applause greeted the energetic dancers of the Tbilisi JCC Dance Troupe, while visiting Israel to attend the Carmiel Dance Festival and also perform in Jerusalem. The visit was a direct outcome of the partnership that was developed between **Uri Strizover** of IACC, Israel and **Ilia Baazov** of the JCC in Tbilisi.

Oct. 16-20

London JCC staff visit to Beit Dan JCC, Kharkov

As a direct outcome of the FSU Mentoring/Professional Exchange Project between **Neil Taylor** of Jewish Care and **Jana Maistrenko** of Beit Dan JCC in Kharkov and as a follow-up to a successful visit of Beit Dan JCC staff delegation to London in February, several members of the Redbridge JCC in London led by **Daniel Carmel Brown**, visited Beit Dan JCC to continue programs of exchange, networking and joint study.

October 24

WCJCC supports Jewish Social Action Month

JCCs around the world joined Jewish institutions at the initiative of **Kol Dor**, a grass roots young leadership organization, to dedicate the Hebrew month of Heshvan to social action programs and activities. The initiative was launched at the Israeli parliament, the Knesset, with a special joint session of the Education and Absorption Committees promoting and supporting the idea.

Oct. 26- Nov. 5

CDI Mexico Leadership Seminar in Israel

Seventeen lay leaders from CDI Mexico, led by the President of the Executive Committee, **Dani Shor**, participated in a ten-day training seminar in Israel aimed at reaffirming the vision and mission of CDI, reconnecting with Israel and its people and acquiring leadership skills. The project was made possible thanks to a generous grant from the Alfred J. Lippman Foundation of UJA Federation of New York and additional funds from WCJCC and CDI.

November 7

Bombay JCC leaders visit WCJCC office

Leaders from the Evelyn Peters JCC in Bombay, India including JCC President, **Samson Birwadker**, visited the WCJCC Jerusalem office as part of their JDC Buncher Program schedule. Recent developments in the JCC and future possibilities for collaboration were discussed.