

# CULTIVATING THE NEXT GENERATION



## HUC-JIR's COLLEGE

**Rachel Litcofsky & Cathy Weinberger**

**T**he College-Institute's Youth Programs have a crucial mission: to attract the youngest emerging leaders associated with the Reform Movement to HUC-JIR and a future in the Jewish professional world. In fact, more than half of the students currently enrolled in HUC-JIR's rabbinical school participated in an HUC-JIR-sponsored youth program during their high school and/or college years.

"It is clear from extensive interviews with interested students that many of our applicants had their excitement piqued because of their first HUC-JIR experiences as teenagers coming to Cincinnati," explains Rabbi Ken Kanter, Director of the Rabbinical Program and Interim Regional Director of Admissions and Recruitment at HUC-JIR/Cincinnati. "Youth weekends at HUC-JIR and participation in the Union for Reform Judaism (URJ) camps are the two most successful and often repeated experiences that inspire them to become students at HUC-JIR."

### **Alumni as Vital Links**

The College-Institute relies on its alumni as the vital links between young people in their

*(Photos above) High school and college students from across the country participate in HUC-JIR Youth Programs throughout the year.*

congregations and the opportunities for leadership development sponsored on the campuses. Alumni are invited to nominate qualified high school candidates, who are then personally invited to take part in Youth Programs. Many alumni make special arrangements to bring their confirmation classes to HUC-JIR's campuses. They also mentor college students toward graduate study at HUC-JIR.

### **Connecting in Cincinnati**

Each year approximately 250 high school and college students from more than ninety congregations throughout North America spend three to four days in Cincinnati studying, singing, worshipping, and enjoying a transformative experience together. Enthusiastic after a long weekend filled with vitalized Jewish commitment, strengthened identity, and peer kinship, the participants feel empowered to further develop and evolve into tomorrow's rabbis, cantors, Jewish communal service professionals, and educators. The young people who attend youth programs each year receive vital encouragement through relationships forged with the rabbinical students who facilitate the programs and share stories of their own journeys that led them to rabbinical school.

The rabbinical student facilitators commit to a two-year internship. In this position they oversee all of the logistics, administrative responsibilities, and management involved

with running the Youth Programs Department. Rabbinical interns strive to create innovative programs that challenge, stimulate, and motivate the participants. They work to ensure that every detail is meticulously executed, from the weekend theme to the meals, from the transportation to the entertainment, from the *Shabbat* services to the song sessions and the participation of renowned faculty members as guest scholars.

"The Youth Programs Department at HUC-JIR/Cincinnati gives high school and college students the opportunity to see a side of Jewish study to which they may not yet have been exposed," explains fifth-year rabbinical student Joel Simon, C '07, who recently served as an intern for two years. "Many of them see the rabbinate as something that only 'their rabbi' can do, but after engaging in the study experience for a weekend and seeing the wide array of rabbinical students who immerse themselves in this exploration daily, they realize that they too can live this life if they desire."

Some of the unique opportunities that the Youth Department offers include celebrating *Shabbat* in a new and different way than back home, spending time with some of the leading Judaic scholars in the world, talking informally in the dorms, and forming discussion groups based on compelling and challenging study topics.

# TION OF HUC-JIR STUDENTS:



# AND YOUTH PROGRAMS

The Cincinnati campus provides participants with an array of world-renowned resources. They have access to the Klau Library, one of the most extensive Jewish libraries in the world, including its collection of manuscripts, books, maps, and other rare items housed in the Dalsheimer Rare Book Building; The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives' collections of artifacts documenting the Jewish past and present; and the Skirball Museum – Cincinnati's encyclopedic display of Jewish history and cultural heritage. These treasures reinforce the informal learning programs and enrich the overall experience.

## Joining Together in Jerusalem

Thousands of North American students participate annually in Youth Programs on the Jerusalem campus, from NFTY (North American Federation of Temple Youth) teens and youngsters on other summer youth trips, to students spending the semester in Israel as part of the Eisendrath International Exchange (EIE) and college students studying abroad for the year. Working closely with The Saltz Education Center at WUPJ Jerusalem and Keshet (the Youth Division of the Union for Reform Judaism), Rabbi David Wilfond, Director of Outreach and Admissions at HUC-JIR/Jerusalem, sponsors weekend programs designed especially for the large number of college students studying in Israel.

“The goal is to provide meaningful Reform Jewish experiences and spiritual support for college students from North American Reform families studying at the universities in Jerusalem, Haifa, Tel Aviv, and Beer Sheva, or working in the service-based leadership development programs Otzma, WUJS, and Young Judea,” explains Wilfond. He hosts students for the High Holy Days on the HUC-JIR campus, where they worship side-by-side with HUC-JIR's Year-In-Israel cohort and Israeli rabbinical students. In addition, he organizes three major *shabbatonim* – *Shabbat* retreats with intensive Jewish learning in cooperation with the Saltz Center.

## The New York Experience

The Miller High School Program at HUC-JIR offers a special two-year high school honors program for students entering 11th and 12th grades from congregations throughout New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut. Reform rabbis, cantors, and educators select students from their congregations to participate in this program, which meets two Sundays a month during the academic year. Over fifty high school students are enrolled each year. Rabbinical, cantorial, and education students supervise and teach the classes together with leading scholars on the HUC-JIR faculty. Students have the opportunity to meet with lay and professional leaders of the Reform Movement as well.

Seymour and Claire Glass Miller, founders of the program, note, “When students from the far reaches of the New York metropolitan area dedicate their precious weekend to study at HUC-JIR, it says a great deal about the quality of this program. We are delighted by the probability of these young people becoming future Jewish leaders.”

The post-confirmation students enjoy the opportunity to expand their knowledge of Jewish texts, liturgy, and Reform Judaism, with curriculum spanning *Torah* study, Israeli current events, Hebrew language, midrash workshops, research projects, and more. Group study, discussion groups, and guest speakers raise the students' consciousness of the critical issues facing North American and world Jewry. Students are encouraged to replicate these learning sessions in their home synagogues. Worship is a core component of the program; students learn to lead services and to bring these skills back into their congregations.

Jo Kay, Director of the New York School of Education and of the Miller High School, remarked, “The Miller High School Honors Program provides an opportunity for young leaders to hone their skills and interact with leaders in the Jewish community, scholars, and peers in the hope that they will choose to become Jewish professionals or lay leaders in their communities.”



# YOUTH PROGRAMS

(continued)



This year the Youth Department at HUC-JIR/New York will have a student intern who will be a liaison to NFTY and Keshet. Rabbi Faith Joy Dantowitz, Regional Director of Admissions and Recruitment for the East Coast, works alongside the Youth Program interns and together they are amongst the faculty for the URJ Keshet Convention. The New York campus is also involved in programs for the February 2007 NFTY and Youth Workers Convention in Philadelphia. Throughout the year, student liaisons work with student groups, youth groups, confirmation classes, and adult groups to coordinate tours of the campus and arrange participation in the student-run Soup Kitchen, which is held every Monday evening. During the summer, HUC-JIR students, alumni, and admissions and recruitment staff continue their outreach efforts to college and high school students at the URJ camps throughout the country, meeting with potential Jewish leaders of today and tomorrow.

### Los Angeles Outreach

The Youth Department at HUC-JIR/Los Angeles facilitates programs with Jewish high school and college students in the West and Southwest region. Dr. Matt Albert, Regional Director of Admissions and Recruitment, supervises interns who introduce Reform youth to HUC-JIR's programs, faculty, students, and campus life. High school students have the opportunity to participate in two Sunday programs – a day of engagement with HUC-JIR faculty and students, and an orientation to undergraduate university

admissions that focuses on how to find out about Jewish life, activities, and involvement as a college student. Students attending universities in Southern California and the West can engage in daylong or evening programs with HUC-JIR students and faculty, which also involve the greater Jewish community, including local Hillels, the URJ's Keshet program, and synagogues in the area.

### Partnerships Foster Opportunity

Partnership with the URJ and its congregations plays a significant role in recruiting high school and college students to on-campus programs and provides alternative, off-campus venues for their personal and educational growth. Each year the URJ Keshet Convention enables college students from across the continent to join together to study and consider the future of Judaism here and abroad. NFTY annual regional conclaves for high school students bring together the youngest Reform Movement leaders for kinship and leadership development. The annual HUC-JIR/Religious Action Committee Social Justice Weekend represents a unique forum for high school students to debate social justice issues affecting contemporary American life and get involved in human rights advocacy. This coming year, participants will explore Jewish attitudes towards communal and personal responsibility as they relate to social policy.

Former Youth Programs rabbinical intern Rabbi Michael Namath continues to be a devoted supporter of HUC-JIR's Youth Programs, as do most of his peers who, as

ordained rabbis, are serving congregations, Reform institutions, and Jewish organizations around the world. "The Youth Programs department provides a vital opportunity for Jewish youth," states Rabbi Namath, now Program Director at the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism (RAC) in Washington DC. "As an alumnus, I am pleased to be able to continue my support as a co-sponsor of the HUC-JIR and RAC youth programs weekend."

Over the past twenty-seven years, high school and college student participants in all of these programs have not only strengthened their Jewish identity and commitment but have been influenced to consider careers as Jewish leaders.

**Please share the directory of High School and College Programs [see next page] with young people who have the potential for lives of meaning and excellence through study at HUC-JIR. ■**

## DID YOU KNOW?

**In 2006 and 2007, taxpayers age 70 1/2 and older can give away up to \$100,000 a year from their IRA's directly to charities,**

**TAX FREE!**

*Please consult your financial advisor*

# 2006-07 HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE PROGRAMS

www.hucyouthprograms.org

## HUC-JIR NATIONAL YOUTH PROGRAMS

Rabbinical Interns: Amy Hertz, Daniel Septimus, and Bill Tepper  
3101 Clifton Avenue, Cincinnati, Ohio 45220-2488, (513) 221-1875 x3232 youthprograms@huc.edu

### HUC-JIR/RAC SOCIAL JUSTICE WEEKEND

*"It's Good for Me, Is it Good for You?"*

Where do our obligations lie? Come explore Jewish attitudes towards communal and personal responsibility as they relate to issues of social policy.

**Date:** November 10-12, 2006 **Location:** HUC-JIR/Cincinnati  
**Grades:** 10th-12th **Focus:** Social Justice **Cost:** \$110

### GESHER

*"The Birds, the Bees, and the Bible"*

Sex in the text? Who would've thought? Join us as we explore historical and modern Jewish attitudes towards sexuality.

**Date:** December 1-3, 2006 **Location:** HUC-JIR/Cincinnati  
**Grades:** 10th-12th **Focus:** Student Leaders **Cost:** \$110

### HUC-JIR ACADEMY

*"I STILL Have a Dream!"*

Be a part of our annual celebration of Martin Luther King Jr.'s legacy as we consider issues of Jewish responsibility to the greater community.

**Date:** January 12-15, 2007 **Location:** HUC-JIR/Cincinnati  
**Grades:** 10th-12th **Focus:** Academic Students **Cost:** \$130

### 2007 COLLEGE COLLOQUIUM

*"Whose Judaism is it Anyway?"*

Meet other Reform college students as we discuss issues of denominationalism on campus and in the larger world.

**Date:** February 2-4, 2007 **Location:** HUC-JIR/Cincinnati  
**Grades:** Freshman-Senior College Students **Cost:** \$80

### MECHKAR

*"The Ten Commandments: Stone Cold?"*

Study the development of the Ten Commandments and discuss their place in contemporary life. They might not be as set in stone as you think!

**Date:** March 23-25, 2007 **Location:** HUC-JIR/Cincinnati  
**Grades:** 10th-12th **Focus:** Academic Students **Cost:** \$110

### HIGH SCHOOL LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE (HSLC)

*"More Than Just a Good Falafel"*

Explore innovative ideas for programming about Israel in your youth group and community as we prepare to celebrate Israel's 59th birthday!

**Date:** April 13-15, 2007 **Location:** HUC-JIR/Cincinnati  
**Grades:** 10th-12th **Focus:** Youth Group Leaders **Cost:** \$110.00

## REGIONAL PROGRAMS

### CINCINNATI PROGRAMS

#### NFTY-Ohio Valley Study Kallah

January 19-21, 2007  
Planned by NFTY-OV and coordinated by HUC-JIR's Department of Youth Programs. Applications available from the NFTY-OV Office.

**Information:**

Rabbi Ken Kanter, Regional Director of Admissions and Recruitment; (513) 221-1875 x 3256; kkanter@huc.edu

### JERUSALEM PROGRAMS

A partnership with HUC-JIR, The Saltz Education Center at Hebrew University, and the URJ's Keshet Youth Division. Visit <http://www.huc.edu/academics/continuing/outreach/> for a full schedule of Reform on Campus meetings, *Shabbat* din-

ners with local synagogues, High Holy Day programs on the Jerusalem campus, and *Shabbaton* weekend programs, for college students studying in Israel during the Fall 2006-Spring 2007 semesters.

**Information:**

Rabbi David Wilfond, Director of Outreach and Admissions; 972-2-620-3392; dwilfond@huc.edu

### LOS ANGELES PROGRAMS

High school and college students are invited to learn more about the Los Angeles campus and HUC-JIR programs.

**Information:**

Matt Albert, Regional Director of Admissions and Recruitment; (213) 765-2121; malbert@huc.edu

### NEW YORK PROGRAMS

#### The Miller High School Honors Program

A two-year post-confirmation program for students entering 11th and 12th grades from congregations throughout New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut; meeting every other Sunday from 10:30 am – 2:00 pm throughout the academic year at the HUC-JIR/New York campus, located in Greenwich Village.

**Information:**

Jo Kay, Director of the New York School of Education; (212) 824-2213; nysed@huc.edu

#### NFTY Leadership Training Institute for the New York Area Region

Planned by NFTY-NYAR and coordinated by HUC-JIR/NY

Youth Department. Applications available from NFTY-NYAR office.

**Information:**

Rabbi Faith Joy Dantowitz, Regional Director of Admissions and Recruitment; (212) 824-2207; fdantowitz@huc.edu

### YOUTH GROUP AND CONFIRMATION CLASS TOURS

Congregations are invited to bring confirmation classes, youth groups, and other classes to all HUC-JIR campuses. Please contact the above-mentioned regional departments to set up a visit. Groups are encouraged to contact [soupkitchen@huc.edu](mailto:soupkitchen@huc.edu) well in advance of a New York campus visit in order to arrange participation in the Monday evening Soup Kitchen.