



## UJA-Federation of New York and HUC-JIR: Advancing Jewish Learning and Leadership

The generous support of UJA-Federation of New York has enabled HUC-JIR to develop and implement projects that are changing the landscape of Jewish educational leadership, congregational and community education programs, and social responsibility and pastoral counseling training for HUC-JIR's students.

**"The long-term collaboration between UJA-Federation of New York and Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion has had an extraordinary impact on the Jewish community. Over the past ten years alone, UJA-Federation has invested \$7.5 million to work with HUC-JIR on invigorating Jewish education. The highly successful Experiment in Congregational Education and the Leadership Institute for Congregational School Leaders is transforming synagogue life. Through projects focused on adult Jewish learning research and on supporting community service learning in Israel, we are connecting Jews to their identity and to each other. We look forward to our continuing work together, innovating Jewish education and inspiring Jewish leaders."**



*John Ruskay, Executive Vice President & CEO, UJA-Federation of New York*

## Leadership Institute

Fully funded by UJA-Federation of New York with grants totaling nearly \$6 million to date, the Leadership Institute is a joint project of HUC-JIR's New York School of Education and the Davidson Graduate School of Education at the Jewish Theological Seminary (JTS). It has provided advanced training in leadership, pedagogy, and Judaica to 77 educators in the greater New York area to date and has just launched its third cohort of 38 principals, assistant principals, and family educators. The two-and-a-half year program develops enhanced leadership capacity through graduate level learning, mentorship by leading educators in the field, assessment, and implementation of a funded action research project to enhance faculty learning in their schools.

"Now in its third cycle, the program is adding key innovations that address the need for new visions and models for Jewish education supported by synagogue teams, including shared leadership between educators and lay leaders, clergy, and faculty to effect positive change within congregations," explained Dr. Evie Rotstein, Leadership Institute Director. "Furthermore, a new collaboration within the Foundation for Jewish Camp will deepen participants' understanding of Jewish overnight and experiential learning."

The Experiment in Congregational Education continues to be the nation's premier synagogue transformation project focused on Jewish learning, thanks to the support of UJA-Federation of New York. The project works with congregations and community organizations to help them fundamentally re-imagine congregational education and to foster innovation as an ongoing practice in congregational life. In New York, ECE is entering its second year of a close collaboration with the local communal agency, the Jewish Education Project, and the joint HUC-JIR and JTS Leadership Institute. This collaboration is working with close to 140 congregations across the greater New York area to develop new models and practices of 21st-century Jewish learning.

"Building on the work of the three cohorts of ECE's RE-IMAGINE Project of New York, this project is building capability among less change ready congregations, and forging networks to share and disseminate the innovations of pioneering congregations," stated Dr. Rob Weinberg, ECE Director. "It is deepening congregational staffs' abilities to create powerful learning experiences that are life-centered, treat the learner as an active agent in his/her own learning, and achieve articulated learner outcomes."

## The Experiment in Congregational Education (ECE)

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The generous support of UJA-Federation of New York's Solelim Fund makes possible the curricular centerpiece of the Community Service Learning Program (CSLP) at HUC-JIR/Jerusalem. First-year rabbinical, cantorial, and education students in the Year-In-Israel Program are required to fulfill 2-4 hours of community service weekly in order to gain a more profound understanding of

## Community Service Learning/Pastoral Counseling Fieldwork

Israeli society by contributing positive, ongoing impact on various community organizations covering a broad range of social issues. These meaningful activities include aiding families whose everyday lives have been drastically altered as a result of terrorist attacks, providing English tutoring to underprivileged children, assisting Ethiopian immigrants' adjustment to life in Israel, and visiting nursing home residents, many of whom have little or no family to visit them regularly.

In addition, the Solelim Fund supports the hands-on fieldwork conducted by Israel Rabbinical Program students in fulfillment of the pastoral counseling requirements of their curriculum. Since pastoral care is a nascent field in Israeli society, with very few paid internships available, this support helps fund student placements and contributes to the significant growth of the chaplaincy field in Israel.

UJA-Federation of New York commissioned a five-year study of J Learn, the adult Jewish learning initiative on Long Island. Between 2004 and 2009, Dr. Lisa D. Grant, Associate Professor of Jewish Education, and Dr. Diane Tickton Schuster, Director, HUC-JIR's Institute for Teaching Jewish Adults, tracked the growth and development of the J Learn Initiative through surveys, interviews, and focus groups with various constituents. "Our research revealed two core populations where Jewish learning may have the most significant impact: those actively committed to Jewish life but not yet engaged in learning and those moderately engaged and just beginning to become excited about Jewish learning," said Dr. Grant. "Our findings further demonstrated that more substantive and relevant learning programs need to be developed for Jewish communal professionals, including rabbis and educators, for whom Jewish learning should be linked more explicitly to their other roles in the Jewish community and should enhance how they approach their leadership and management responsibilities."

## J Learn Adult Learning Initiative Study