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Brandeis Mandel Center Preparing Teachers to be Students of their Own Practice



DeLeT graduates look forward to entering the classroom

Too few teachers are encouraged to ask questions about their own teaching practice. This is as true for Jewish day school teachers as it is for any educator. Yet asking these questions is an important way for teachers to improve as professionals. When the members of the 2007-08 DeLeT (Day School Leadership Through Teaching)/MAT (Master of Arts in Teaching) Program at Brandeis University mark the end of their fellowships, they enter their own classrooms having gone through a unique program that features ongoing, careful examination of their own teaching.

We believe in an ‘inquiry stance,’ in which teachers carefully examine their own work as professionals throughout their career,” said DeLeT Director Judy Elkin.

“This strengthens both their individual practice and the field of Jewish education as a whole. When they begin teaching on their own, our alumni continue to reflect on how they can be better teachers, informed by their own research and that of others in the field.”

This year’s fellows were honored on July 24 in a ceremony called “Tekkes HaSiyum: A Celebration of Completion” at the Mandel Center for Studies in Jewish Education at Brandeis. They presented their original research, based on studies of their own teaching practice, at a conference the next day. This was followed by the graduation ceremony for all Brandeis MAT students, including those with elementary and secondary Jewish day school and public school concentrations.



“This is the first year in which DeLeT is fully integrated within the Brandeis MAT Program,” said MAT Director Dirck Roosevelt. “DeLeT’s academically rigorous, field-experience-based design has been a perfect fit alongside the other MAT concentrations.”

This year’s crop of DeLeT graduates will go on to teach at schools throughout New England and New York. In the six years of the DeLeT program, Brandeis has prepared a total of 49 day school teachers who have gone on to touch the lives of hundreds of day school students, serving as both strong Jewish role models and teachers of general and Jewish studies.

About DeLeT/MAT

The DeLeT/MAT Program is a partnership of the Brandeis Education Program and the Mandel Center for Studies in Jewish Education. The program prepares Jewish day school teachers for grades one through six to teach general and Judaic studies.

To learn more about the Mandel Center for Studies in Jewish Education and DeLeT/MAT see:

<http://www.brandeis.edu/centers/mandel/DeLeT/>



CWRU Mandel Center for Nonprofit Organizations Representatives Visit Israel for Youth Futures Program



The Mandel Center team worked with mentors in Beit Shean

In March, the Jewish Community Federation (JCF) of Cleveland and the Jewish Agency for Israel invited Pat Heilbron and Gerald Ford to visit Israel and work with staff of the Youth Futures program. Pat Heilbron is Director of the Treu-Mart Youth Development Fellowship Program at the Mandel Center for Nonprofit Organizations in Cleveland, and Gerald Ford is an alumnus of the Fellowship Program, currently employed by Lutheran Metropolitan Ministry.

The Youth Futures program aims to provide at-risk youth with an equal opportunity to develop their unique skills, both academic and social, and to break out of the cycle of poverty and underachievement. As of March 2008, the program covers 5,800 children and 370 trustees in 28 localities, predominately in the Negev and Galilee.

The Mandel Center team worked closely with staff from the Jewish Agency for Israel and the JCF, including Nir Lahav, Director of the Youth Futures Division; Mandel Leadership Institute graduate Yehuda Katz, Assistant Director Oren Baratz; Director of International Operations for the JCF; and Leah Epstein, International Operations Associate for the JCF.

While they spent the majority of their time working with the Youth Futures program in Beit Shean, providing front line youth workers with research, information and strategies for practical application, Heilbron and Ford also spent time conducting workshops. Those sessions included a full-day seminar with the coordinators of all of the Youth Futures sites across the country; a training session for mentors from the Tzahar region; and a meeting with Brigadier General Eli Shermeister, the head of the Israeli Army's Education Corps. The final session was a one-day regional seminar which focused on working with families to support youth. The seminar was attended by heads of municipalities, directors of education and social welfare departments,



school principals and teachers, counselors, social workers, directors of community centers and the Youth Futures mentors.

The Youth Futures program in Beit Shean City and Regional Council has a strong partnership with the JCF, the Jewish Agency and the local municipalities. The joint Advisory Committee is very involved in the planning and implementation of Youth Futures in the region. The Youth Futures program in Beit Shean and the Beit Shean Valley Regional Council addresses the needs of 200 children ages 6-13. Of these children, there are 20 new immigrants from the Former Soviet Union and 10 from Ethiopia.

“The country was beautiful but what I will most treasure is the people we met who welcomed us not only into their workplaces, but into their homes” said Heilbron.

To learn more about the Mandel Center for Nonprofit Organizations visit:
<http://www.case.edu/mandelcenter>

To learn more about the Jewish Community Federation of Cleveland visit:
<http://www.jewishcleveland.org>



Simply Dealing with the Complexities: MTEI Israel Seminar



Seminar participants examine classroom cases

This summer, the Mandel Teacher Educators Institute (MTEI) spent their annual 10-day seminar in Israel (June 30 – July 10) focusing on the theme of Israel's complexities and challenges for Jewish educators today. By definition a difficult subject to reckon with, participants spent their time grappling with different issues and narratives through encounters with other educators, trips, text study, culture and the arts.

Thirty-three senior educators participated in the program led by MTEI director Gail Dorph, which was open to current members of the program as well as its alumni. Among the participants were those enrolled in the Bay Area MTEI program, alumni from the MTEI national program and five others involved with a program about visions in Jewish education, who spent the ten day period studying with Dr. Daniel Marom and his team from the Visions in Jewish Education Project.

The chief goal of the Mandel Teacher Educators Institute, which runs a two-year course of study, is to develop leaders who can stimulate significant change in teaching and learning through improved and creative professional development for teachers in their institutions, in their communities, and at the national level, across the United States and Canada.

The Israel seminar aims to model the kind of learning community that it hopes participants will create in their own settings. The program provides participants with a taste of what serious collaboration on issues of teaching and learning can be like. In addition to learning new frameworks for analyzing teaching, they read and discuss Jewish texts about teaching and learning, examine classroom videotapes and curriculum materials, and study students' work.

One such opportunity for learning was an encounter between MTEI participants and Israeli teachers, facilitators and instructors connected to the



Ovnayim Institute, a non-profit organization for educational knowledge and practice founded and directed by Mandel School for Educational Leadership graduate Shevi Govrin. This group meets regularly to write and discuss cases that present dilemmas related to teaching and learning.

The afternoon of mutual learning took place at the Jerusalem based Mandel Leadership Institute (MLI) and featured the examination and discussion of cases from the classroom.

“Investigating cases is a strategy to engage teachers in discussion of some of the practical and difficult challenges of teaching,” said Dorph. “Because case writing invites teachers to reflect on real dilemmas they face, they provide a rich opportunity for conversation and exploration of enduring dilemmas that relate not only to subject matter and pedagogy, but also on moral and ethical values.”

Participants examined cases which addressed issues of the complexity inherent in educating students in Israel and in the US. The US case “Eighth Graders Talk about Israel” described a class discussion about the students’ connection to Israel, while the Israeli case “With Joy and an Open Heart” described a Bible teacher’s conversation with a 16-year old student who resented being obligated to learn Bible at school.

“Conversations such as these, which are rooted in our practice, beliefs and passions, are likely to create transformation of practice and attitudes because different readers challenge each other to reexamine their values,” said Shevi Govrin.

Both MTEI and Ovnayim are projects designed to engage educators in reflection on classroom practice, albeit with slightly different foci. Using case discussions is one such strategy, and in this case, not only succeeded in creating an interesting conversation about adolescents’ Jewish identity, but also shed light on some of the differences and similarities faced by Israeli and American educators.

To learn more about MTEI visit www.mandelfoundation.org/MTEI



Tomorrow's Leaders of Today's Negev

The Mandel Center for Leadership in the Negev helps mold future leaders of peripheral towns in Israel's South.

The south of Israel: a periphery traditionally synonymous with desert, dust and a slower pace of life. Yet if we look beyond these antiquated stereotypes, we can discover vibrant southern communities, buzzing with young leadership and innovative enterprise for social and educational development of the region. Recognizing this potential, the Mandel Center for Leadership in the Negev (MCLN) is running a two-year community-based leadership program for the Negev towns of Eilat and Netivot. This Mandel initiative aims to prepare a cadre of future communal leaders to ensure the continuation and sustainability of the social and educational development of the two cities.



Netivot group taking part in a two-day outdoor training retreat

Each program has 20 participants and is comprised of promising mid-career professionals. In order to be admitted to the Mandel programs, participants must possess leadership skills, a proven record of communal activism, and social responsibility. Commitment to remain in Eilat and Netivot after graduation and to be active in the community is a prerequisite of the program.

Participants include social activists, educators and municipal employees. Indeed, a wide variety of people have come together to form a group that intends to make a big impact on their cities' future.

Both groups will meet over a course of two years. The first year consists of a weekly program of learning with guest lecturers from Ben-Gurion University, Sapir College and MCLN faculty. The second year will be spent planning and then implementing changes or a project that participants work on in a number of groups around one common subject. The program focuses not only on participants' personal development but on their development as a group.



Recently the Netivot group took part in a two-day outdoor training retreat aimed to build up group dynamics and common goals.

Each program has a slightly different focus, stemming from the preferences of group members and the relevancy to their city's needs. For the Netivot group, therefore, education is more of a focal point, whereas the Eilat group focuses on treatment of minority groups in society, and the development of tourism.

The programs are expanding and have even attracted the attention of regional press, "The prestigious Mandel program in the town of Netivot has elicited growing demand among public activists who want to take part in the program" reported newspaper 'This Week in the South'.

The fast-growing Mandel Center for Leadership in the Negev was established by the Mandel Foundation in cooperation with the Ben-Gurion University of the Negev in 2004. The Center's vision is to achieve a marked increase in the number of leaders in the Negev, who work according to a value-based vision and who can lead institutions and public systems towards the application of this vision.

To learn more about the Mandel Center for Leadership in the Negev visit:

www.mlc-negev.org.il/english



Future Reform Rabbinic Leaders Grapple with Questions of Collectivity and Jewish Peoplehood



HUC Mandel Fellows in Jerusalem

The HUC Mandel Fellows, a group of 8 HUC rabbinical students who just completed a special year of studies in Jewish education, spent an intensive three week seminar this summer grappling with the challenges of leading congregational communities in North America and connecting them to the Jewish people globally. Over the course of the seminar, which took place at the Mandel Leadership Institute and Hebrew Union College in Jerusalem, participants explored a variety of themes and issues related to these challenges.

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The program of study included lectures by scholars and leaders, reflection exercises, site visits, art and music, and encounters with vision-driven institutions and community leaders. Grounded in the work of the program, the seminar culminated in a series of roundtable presentations, in which fellows presented basic convictions concerning the significance of Jewish life that could meaningfully guide their deliberations and activities as rabbinic leaders. Rabbi David Ellenson, President of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, arrived in Israel in time to participate in the roundtable presentations.

“Rabbi Ellenson’s participation not only added to the high quality of the discussions but conveyed his deep commitment to the importance of this initiative in preparing these future Reform rabbis for their leadership roles,” said Professor Sara S. Lee of HUC-JIR, who is project-leader for the HUC Mandel Fellowship Program, together with Prof. Dan Pekarsky of the Mandel Foundation.

The HUC Mandel Fellowship Program is offered annually to a select group of HUC Rabbinic students who elect to complete an MA in Jewish Education at HUC after their third year of rabbinic studies and before completing the last



two years of study toward ordination. Anchored in the belief that vital congregations depend on exceptional leadership, the HUC Mandel Fellowship Program is designed to cultivate rabbinic leaders with the qualities, understandings, and competencies needed to achieve two inter-related aspirations: to establish inspiring congregational communities that meet their members' needs, and encourage their Jewish growth; and to help foster a social reality in which Jewish peoplehood is universally experienced as a vital and seamless whole that transcends denominational and geographical boundaries.

According to the concept paper that has guided the unfolding of this project, "The goal of this initiative is to create the capacity in a cadre of future rabbinic leaders to guide 21st century Reform congregations toward a vision of a compelling community, infused with Jewish values, enriched by Jewish learning, and capable of enhancing and perpetuating Jewish identity."

To learn more about the HUC-JIR Mandel Fellowship visit:
<http://www.huc.edu/chronicle/70/articles/preparing.pdf>



CWRU Mandel Center hosts national Nonprofit Academic Centers Council (NACC) Meeting



The Mandel Center continues to provide a state-of-the-art facility

The Mandel Center for Nonprofit Organizations continues to receive opportunities to showcase its new, state-of-the-art facility to the nonprofit community. Last month, the Nonprofit Academic Centers Council (NACC) hosted its spring retreat and meeting at the Center, which is also home to the international headquarters of NACC. "This is a milestone for a nonprofit center to have its own building," said Amy McClellan, NACC's executive director.

When the Mandel Center dedicated its new building last November, it became the first nonprofit academic center to reside in its own, freestanding facility.

NACC is an association of nearly 50 world-wide academic centers at accredited colleges and universities that study the nonprofit sector, volunteerism and philanthropy. The organization supports academic centers devoted to the development of nonprofit management leaders through education, research, and community engagement and involvement.

According to McClellan, the meeting focused on the role that academic centers can play in promoting and conducting research related to the nonprofit sector.

With a "pulse on emerging issues," McClellan explained, "academically-based centers for the study of nonprofits and philanthropy are uniquely situated to both generate and access the latest research and thinking about the nonprofit sector."

During the course of the two-day meeting, NACC members mapped out the various kinds of research projects at different institutions, and discussed



financial resources for research and collaboration opportunities, among other strategies. As a result of this work, NACC will look at ways that it can support the research initiatives of its members, said McClellan.

“I was very pleased to be part of such an extremely productive discussion supported by the excellent physical surroundings,” said Kathy Agard, executive director of the Dorothy A. Johnson Center for Philanthropy and Nonprofit Leadership at Grand Valley State University, after attending NACC’s June meeting. “The beautiful, new Mandel Center facility performed masterfully in its technology, comfort and flexibility; an inspiration for all of the attending Centers regarding the maturation of the field.”

J. Patrick Murphy, director of the School of Public Service at DePaul University and treasurer of the NACC Board of Directors, explained that the meeting was especially uplifting because it was a celebration of the service of outgoing chair, Russ Cargo, and because most of the attendees had not seen the new Mandel Center.

“The building added to the uplifted spirits of the group in its design, comfort, beauty, and in the hospitality shown by staff,” Murphy explained.

To learn more about the Mandel Center for Nonprofit Organizations visit:
<http://www.case.edu/mandelcenter>