

BUILDING THE JEWISH CONNECTION:

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The added value for Jewish Community Centers of connecting Jews to the Jewish community and the Jewish people



Initial presentation of findings from interviews with directors and presidents of JCCs worldwide, for purpose of discussing how best to shape the interview data for the WCJCC 8th Quadrennial Conference in November 2009.

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BUILDING THE JEWISH CONNECTION

THE ADDED VALUE FOR JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTERS OF CONNECTING JEWS TO THE JEWISH COMMUNITY AND THE JEWISH PEOPLE

OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH

The goal is to build a conference program for the WCJCC 8th Quadrennial Conference, November 2-5, 2009. The conference will provide a forum for the purpose of debate, learning and thinking about the areas in which Jewish Community Centers distinguish themselves as a result of their core mission of building Jewish community and ties to Israel and the Jewish People.

- 11 interviews (9 interviews completed to date) are currently being conducted with directors and presidents of JCC's worldwide in order to delineate key themes and build best practices/case studies that will serve as the organizing structure of the conference.
- This document is presented to the conference advisory committee for the purpose of formative feedback in order to proceed with conference planning.

The table below provides an overview of the 9 interviews carried out to date and the two remaining interviews.

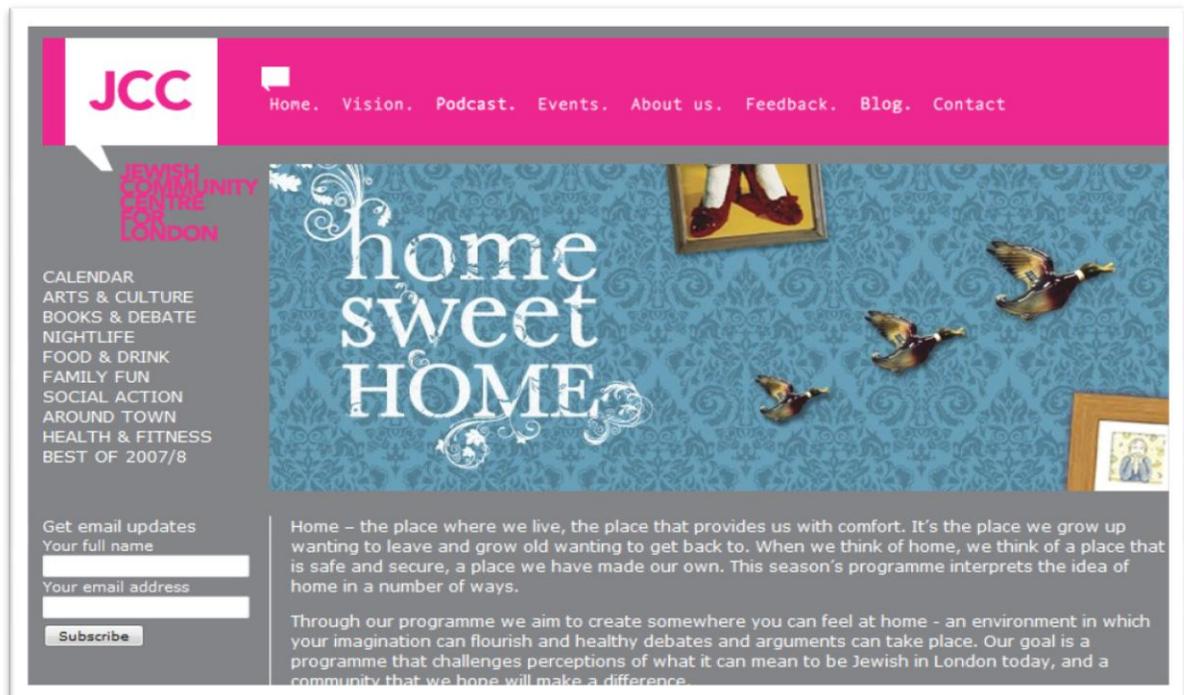
	Name Of JCC	City, Country	Exec. Director or President Interviewed
South America	Hebraica	Caracas, Venezuela	Anabella Jaroslavsky, ED
	Club Náutico Hacoaj	Buenos Aires, Argentina	Ariel Jenik, ED
Western Europe	JCC For London	London, England	Nick Viner, ED
	Toulouse. <u>To Do</u>	Toulouse, France	Ephraim Teitelbaum, Regional Dir.
Eastern Europe	Beit Grand	Odessa, Ukraine	Tatyana Sergeeva, ED
	Shalom	Sophia, Bulgaria	Alek Oscar, Vice President
	JCC Tashkent	Tashkent, Uzbekistan	Alona Van Yu, ED
Israel	Neve Yosef	Haifa, Israel	Moshe Hazut, ED
	International Cultural Centre	Jerusalem, Israel	Shaikhe El Ami, ED
United States	Greater Pittsburgh	Pittsburgh, USA	Brian Schreiber, ED
	Boston. <u>To Do</u>	Boston, USA	Jeffrey Savit, President

- Each interview lasted between 60 and 75 minutes
- Interviews were carried out by telephone, with the exception of ICCY Jerusalem which was done in person.
- An additional interview was carried out with Jean-Charles Zerbib, Fonds Social Juif Unifié, for the purpose of learning about JCCs and the Jewish community in France.

GENERAL CONCEPT OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER

Characteristics mentioned in all interviews as core JCC goals:

- **Jewish home**
 - To promote the feeling that the JCC is "my Jewish home" (see picture below as example).
 - A place where Jews are motivated to spend time with, and benefit from, interacting with other Jews.
- **Community Building- Inclusion of different Jewish populations**
 - Enable access of lower socio/ economic classes to JCC services/programs.
 - Facilitate access to those who have not been previously involved in Jewish communal life.
 - Increase awareness of services and programs offered by JCC.
- **A Jewish institution**
 - Not a religious, but a Jewish institution, a place where both religious and non-religious Jews from different backgrounds interact and feel comfortable with one another.
 - A meeting place for the wider Jewish community.
 - A place where members of different denominations interact with one another.
 - Increase awareness of the value of Jewish community and culture.
- **Resource Development**
 - Prioritizing budget, to the extent possible, for Jewish education and community building.
 - Strategies for coping with the recent financial crisis.
- **Involvement and connection**
 - Increase involvement in the life of the Jewish community and culture and develop connections of Jews to Israel and the Jewish people.



POSSIBLE TOPICS FOR WCJCC CONFERENCE

Beyond the characteristics common to all JCCs are issues which a JCC director/president and his or her board grapple with, as they determine the direction of their JCC. A list of some central issues and dilemmas are presented below. The WCJCC conference will structure discussion around four units, each unit based upon a set of dilemmas. Each working group in charge of conference planning will then develop one unit. Different methodologies or combination of methodologies are suggested, for example: plenary session, workshops, case study analysis, best practices program fair and site visits.

1. Implementing JCC vision through Jewish community building

- **Accessibility and inclusion**
 - How can the JCC become accessible to all Jews (different denominations, gender, special needs, intermarried couples etc.)? Is there a risk of distancing core members?
 - How can the JCC enable participation of religious Jews, while keeping the JCC pluralistic?
 - How can JCCs keep members active in Jewishly oriented programming through the years, especially after they no longer have young children?
 - Does the JCC prioritize work with a particular age group(s) or does it serve populations over the entire life spectrum?
- **Urban community**
 - Is it the role of the JCC to provide social /welfare services to the wider community?
 - What is the role of the JCC vis-a-vis the non Jewish community?
 - How can social activism / Tikkun Olam be developed as a core value for community oriented service?
- **Collaboration**
 - Is the JCC a convener of interests or a leader in the Jewish community?
 - What are the assets for community wide collaboration between the JCC and other Jewish and non-Jewish institutions and how can the JCC keep its distinctive identity?
- **Staff**

To what extent does a JCC train its staff for the goal of Jewish community building?

 - Are the families of staff invited to participate in communal events and celebrations?
 - To what extent should staff engage in issues touching on Jewish values and ethics as part of their work?
 - To what extent is there staff training on issues touching on inclusion of different types of Jews and sensitivity to cultural differences?
 - Does JCC staff actively grapple with the inclusion of non-Jews in programs while considering the implications for the Jewish community building mission of the JCC?
- **Lay leadership**

To what extent does the JCC encourage involvement of laity in shaping the Jewish mission of the organization and initiating and running programs and services:

 - At the level of the board?
 - In the broader programming and communal service structure of the JCC?

2. Developing creative ways of Jewish learning in JCCs

- **Integration of the Jewish dimension**
 - To what extent is an effort made to consciously integrate a Jewish dimension into a broad range of programs and services offered by the JCC?
 - Is there a role for the JCC in educating non-Jews about Judaism?
 - How can Jewish learning be integrated into departments such as sports, youth, and cultural arts?
 - How can a JCC mobilize staff, lay leaders, and members in an effort to strengthen Jewish education?
 - Can a JCC develop a strong Jewish communal agenda even with many non Jewish members?
- **Jewish practice**
 - What are appropriate areas of JCC programming in the area of religious observance?
 - What are strategies for collaboration with synagogues and how do they contribute to the community building mission of the JCC?
- **Social action/Tikkun Olam/social welfare oriented programs**
 - What strategies are used to encourage community volunteer service?
 - How does service oriented volunteering contribute to the Jewish mission of the JCC?
 - How is volunteer service used to incorporate different types of populations into Jewish community?

3. Resource development strategies that enhance mission

- **General resource development strategy**
 - Does a JCC's resource development strategy complement and extend the mission of building Jewish community?
 - Addressing the current economic crisis, what are the best resource development strategies for times of crisis and can the Jewish mission survive?
 - To what extent does dependence on "non-Jewish" sources of revenue aide, or hinder the Jewish mission of the JCC?
 - To what extent, does the Jewish mission depend on one time grants or budget allocations?
- **Lay leadership**
 - To what extent does the JCC encourage involvement of laity in shaping the Jewish mission in terms of fund raising and resource development?
- **Collaborations and sponsorships**
 - How do JCCs utilize collaborations with other institutions to share resources and for the purpose of fundraising?
 - What strategies are pursued for attaining sponsorship by corporate or public organizations for JCC activities?

4. The Connection to Israel and the Jewish People

- **Programming**
 - Is the connection to Israel and world Jewry integrated into the programming and community building strategy of a JCC?
 - Are Israel and world Jewry considered a core value?
 - What are the strategies to make Israel and Jewish peoplehood tangible and relevant to JCC members?
- **Staff education**
 - Are staff members engaged in travel or exchange programs with other Jewish communities in Israel?
- **Resource Development**
 - How does the connection to Israel and world Jewry integrate into a JCCs resource development strategy? Does such a strategy exist at all?

OVERVIEW OF JCCS INCLUDED IN RESEARCH PROJECT

Variety of JCCs – General Characteristics

	South America		Western Europe		Eastern Europe			Israel		United States	
	Hebraica	Club Náutico Hacoaj	JCC for London	Toulouse <u>Planned</u>	Beit Grand	Shalom	JCC Tashkent	Neve Yosef	Tarbut HaAmim	Greater Pittsburgh	Boston <u>Planned</u>
City, Country	Caracas, Venezuela	Buenos Aires, Argentina	London, England	Toulouse, France	Odessa, Ukraine	Sophia, Bulgaria	Tashkent, Uzbekistan	Haifa, Israel	Jerusalem, Israel	Pittsburgh, USA	Boston, USA
Website	Click Here	Click Here	Click Here			Click Here		Click Here	Click Here	Click Here	
Founding date	1967	1935	2004 Currently: a JCC without walls		2008	1992. Also during pre-WWII.	2001		2001	1895	
Outstanding facts	Only JCC in Caracas operated by the Vaad Kehilla, a collaborative framework of all Caracas synagogues. The JCC, by design complements synagogues and the community's day school.	Founded as a rowing club which developed into a JCC. The focus on sports continues to dominate programming and facilities.	First JCC in downtown London. Aims to provide a non-religious, non-demon. space in a community dominated by synagogues as primary institutions of Jewish life.		Building to open Spring 2009. Goal: Build a successful model for secular Jewish community in Post-Soviet Ukraine.	Sophia Community operates synagogue, old age home, special State School and JCC. Created as part of the revival of post-Soviet Bulgarian Jewish life.	Only JCC in Tashkent. Building belongs to Joint. Small – 200 sq. meters.	Serves lower economic class, high ethnic diversity, immigrants from all over, Muslims. Part of recent movement among Israeli community centers to prioritize Jewish renewal.	Leader among Israeli JCCs to develop participatory democracy and volunteer culture which integrates Jewish renewal as a central dimension.	Founded as settlement house (social welfare, camping, early childhood) merged with YMHA (fitness) to form JCC.	
Members or Participation as measure of activity	8000 members (11,000 Jews in Caracas)	9000 (adult and children)	9000 annual participants. Currently no membership dues.		Goal is to have 1500 people coming to building on a regular basis. (10,000 Jews in Odessa)	2000 dues paying members (adult only). Dues voluntary. 80% of 6000 Jews in Sophia participate.	1700 participants a month.	2000 daily participants	3000 to 4000 weekly participants. Hundreds of activists and volunteers.	17,000 members. 10,000 to 12,000 non members who pay fee for service.	
Lay Leadership	Keren Hebraica – lay leaders' foundation	Active Lay Board	Active Lay Board		JDC plays this role. Working to develop lay leadership	Building active lay leadership	JDC plays this role.		Active lay leadership through social action and organizational committees.	Active Lay Board	
Age groups	All	All, with focus on youth and families.	All, with focus on 18-30 age group.	Focus in France tends to be adults, not children	Ages 8-50. Elderly served by another org.	All, with focus on youth and elderly	All	All	All	All	

Programming Strategies for Building Jewish Community

	South America		Western Europe		Eastern Europe		Israel		United States		
	Hebraica	Club Náutico Hacoaj	JCC for London	Toulouse Planned	Beit Grand	Shalom	JCC Tashkent	Neve Yosef	International Cultural Centre	Greater Pittsburgh	Boston Planned
City, Country	Caracas, Venezuela	Buenos Aires, Argentina	London, England	Toulouse, France	Odessa, Ukraine	Sophia, Bulgaria	Tashkent, Uzbekistan	Haifa, Israel	Jerusalem, Israel	Pittsburgh, USA	Boston, USA
Programming of special interest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> JCC serves as a complementary educ. system for Community's School located in JCC. 60% of program budget for pre-teen programs. Collaboration with synagogues –learning and holidays 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intensive focus on Jewish sports. 2/3 of programming budget goes to sport. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on 18-30 years. Commission original prfrmnces Platform for new writers and artists Face book, Pod casts. Staff inclusiveness training 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on secular Jews. 2-50 years Modeling religion Focus on music, dance, literature 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leader in regional programming for Balkans. Black sea Gesher for Teens. Balkan Limmud for all ages. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work to integrate Jewish dimensions into all major activities Participant initiated clubs Focus on Uzbek Jewish history 	<p>Recent focused effort to add "J" to "CC," up until now Jewish marked as part of holiday cycle through ceremony, but not central part of extensive volunteer, welfare and educational work.</p>	<p>Emphasis on participatory democracy, volunteering and influencing pluralistic and Jewish character of Jerusalem urban life. 4 full time staff work in this area.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> American Jewish Museum Staff training with focus on Jewish values 	
Examples of programming strategies that enable Jewish community											
At the JCC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jewish sport Inclusion of staff in community programming Kashrut Dues subsidy to enable access Values based drug/alcohol education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jewish Sport Bar mitzvah program for unaffiliated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff inclusiveness training Kashrut 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pessach at Home. Psyc. of Jewish family Weeklong Hannukah Kashrut, coffee shop 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Week long Seder 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff Jewish literacy After school learning center Art therapy Teen ldrshp dev. Holidays integrated into programming 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mark all Jewish holidays through ceremony. Developing Jewish renewal program – beit midrash kehillati, kabbalat shabat etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highly developed volunteer structure. Jewish culture Kashrut, coffee shop. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff Jewish values Close holidays, half day Shabbat Kashrut Separate swim times Dvar torah at Board meetings 	
Collaboration - other Jewish institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth Movements School (inside JCC) Synagogues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Holiday partnering with synagogue. 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth movements Synagogue School 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Synagogues – bar/t mitzvah 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools - Partnership 2000 Pluralistic Orthodox synagogue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Holiday partnering Federation, Synagogues 	
Larger city Jewish/non-Jewish	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jewish Sport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jewish Sport Social action 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social action 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tour guides course of Jewish Odessa. Klezmer Festival 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Euro. Jewish Culture Day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Holiday events in and out of building 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tikkun Olam and Social activism 6 large scale holiday events, 1000 to 20,000 participants. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Museum 	
Regional Jewish community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jewish Sport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jewish Sport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mitzvah day 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaboration with JCCs in other cities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Black Sea Gesher Balkan Limmud 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Museum Jewish Camping 	
Int. Jewish community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jewish Sport Israel trips and madrich training Israeli folk dance festival r/ship with Shoham, Israel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jewish Sport Israel trips and counselor training March of Living Tri Center Project 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaboration - Jewish Agcy and Isr. Clt. Centre for major events. Baltimore is twin Mentoring project project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exchanges with US JCCs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnering with Haifa JCC Mentoring Project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Director partic. in San Fran. Fed leadership program. Boston, NNJ, Tashkent mentoring project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnerships with Westchester (schools) and Manhattan JCC (leadership). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnership with Karmiel, inc. Camp CIT training program in Israel. 	

Resource Development and Jewish Community Building

	South America		Western Europe		Eastern Europe		Israel		United States		
	Hebraica	Club Náutico Hacoaj	JCC for London	Toulouse To do	Beit Grand	Shalom	JCC Tashkent	Neve Yosef	International Cultural Centre	Greater Pittsburgh	Boston To do
City, Country	Caracas, Venezuela	Buenos Aires, Argentina	London, England	Toulouse, France	Odessa, Ukraine	Sophia, Bulgaria	Tashkent, Uzbekistan	Haifa, Israel	Jerusalem, Israel	Pittsburgh, USA	Boston, USA
Opr. Budget	\$6,000,000	\$5,000,000	\$1,400,000		\$150,000	\$1,300,000	\$250,000	\$7,000,000	\$2,500,000	\$17,500,000	
Revenue sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 70% from membership dues Most of rest comes from payment for services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 85% from membership dues Rest - payment for services, corporate sponsorship, individual donations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foundation - 80% of operating exp. for start-up period 20% fees for service, sponsorship 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> JDC covers budget in startup period. Plan is 66% - Payment for services Will rent space to Jewish orgs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 50% covered by JDC, with most of rest coming from rent charged on pre-WWII Jewish properties. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100% JDC attempting to develop event sponsorship. Law forbids payment for services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 70% fund raising for projects 20% payment for services 10% municipal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 65% payment for services 20% fund raising 15% municipality and National Comm. Cent. Assoc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 55% payment for services 27% dues Internal fundraising and grants 	
Membership Dues	\$720 annual per family	\$840 annual for adult	Yes for future – plan to charge minimal fee		None	20 Euro annually	None, due to law	None	None	Yes ??	
Member activity						Member initiated programming – organizers contribute to 50% of costs	Participant initiated programming – organizing groups contribute to costs				
3rd party sponsorship and collaboration on special events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate sponsorship for mega events/festivals +participation fee covers cost 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate sponsorship for sports equipment and events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trusts, Charities, Foundations Other non-profits Corporate Individuals 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Businesses sponsor festivals Collaboration - regional JCCs Baltimore Fed. Sponsors JDC work in Odessa 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate sponsorship for social action projects 	Want to develop corporate sponsorship		
Fundraising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keren Hebraica. Lay foundation - capital expenses. Individual donations for scholarships Grants writing for special programs 	Very little, based on individual donations for capital campaign, scholarships and Tikun Olam programming	Planned for future		Developing lay leadership among business community and want to develop donor base.	Developing capacity, small amounts raised for particular projects. Want to fundraise among business community.		Half time position +plus active participation of all senior staffers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government Corporate Philanthropy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lay leadership fundraising committee. Developing local donor campaign. Philanthropy for special projects . 		
Food	Food court – 8 Kosher restaurants. Self sustaining.										
Religious Events				Life cycle celebrations at synagogue in JCC generate income							