



## Schools Return Back In Session

After varying lengths of winter breaks, area schools returned to session. The earliest schools returning were UC-Riverside and UC-Irvine in the first week of January; the latest is Chapman University in the first week of February. As mentioned in the article in the column to the right, this semester/quarter, this will be the first full semester/quarter that Rabbi Drew Kaplan, myself, will be here, having arrived towards the end of the fall semester/quarter of the area schools.

This will be an opportunity for me, as well as my wife, Rachel, who is the director of Beach Hillel, to start off a fresh new semester and plan out ahead what will be taking place. I am looking forward 😊

## OC Hillel's New Space



Rabbi Drew speaking with a UCI student on 27 January, when Orange County Hillel held an open house gathering to show off their new space, with a greater geographical proximity to UCI's campus, making it easier for students to visit.

## SoCalJSS: An Introduction

After its first five years led by Rabbi Yonah Bookstein, Southern California Jewish Student Services (SoCalJSS) is now being headed by myself, Rabbi Drew Kaplan. SoCalJSS is a project of Beth El Synagogue, generously funded by Allen & Deanna Alevy. In the five years that Rabbi Bookstein served in the capacity of SoCalJSS rabbi, working alongside his wife, Rachel Bookstein, the director for Beach Hillel, he helped start the Jewlicious Festival, mainly targeting college students and young Jews generally. He also has been recently nationally recognized for his involvement in Jewish communal leadership by being one of five finalists in the Jewish Federations of North America's Jewish Community Heroes contest as well as being recently named to Forward 50, a listing of the Jewish paper's 50 top Jewish leaders.

<"Introduction" continued on next page>



Rabbi Drew and Rabbi Yonah Bookstein

## Involvement With Jewlicious Festival

Helping out with the upcoming Jewlicious Festival is one of my responsibilities as SoCalJSS rabbi. The upcoming Jewlicious Festival will be the sixth such occurrence of, as it is described on the Jewlicious Festival website, a "three-day gathering of Jewish students & young adults, Feb. 19-21, 2010, held at the massive 85,000 sq. ft. Alpert JCC in Long Beach. The Festival features leading Jewish personalities, musicians, artists, and writers from around the world for a world-class concert series, inspiring Shabbat experiences, discussions and workshops. Jewlicious has been described as 'an event unlike any other weekend in Jewish history.' Jewlicious unites trend-setters, artists and spirit seekers; Ashkenazim, Sefardim, Persians and Mizrachim; atheists, agnostics, skeptics and believers; designers, activists, jocks, and hipsters."

SoCalJSS has been promoting Jewlicious Festival on the campuses that it serves.

<"Jewlicious" continued on next page>



Rabbi Drew discussing Jewlicious with local college students.

## Torah on Tap

On January 26<sup>th</sup>, partnering up with Inland Empire & Desert Hillel, SoCalJSS held a “Torah on Tap” text-study/discussion on Sex in the Torah at Ye Olde Lamplighter in San Bernardino, primarily for CSU-San Bernardino students. The “Torah on Tap” program is scheduled to be held roughly once-a-month in San Bernardino.



Rabbi Drew with students at Ye Olde Lamplighter for “Torah on Tap”.

<“Introduction” continued from first page>

Having arrived in Southern California on November 9<sup>th</sup>, I have been not only getting a feel for Southern California generally, but also the campuses in the area. SoCalJSS has been working with Beach Hillel, Orange County Hillel, and Inland Empire & Desert Hillel, encompassing primarily the following schools: California State University (CSU) – Fullerton, CSU – Long Beach, CSU – San Bernardino, Chapman University, Long Beach City College, University of California (UC) – Irvine, UC – Riverside, and University of Redlands.



Rabbi Drew lighting menorah candles at UofRedlands' Hillel's Hanukah Party.

SoCalJSS Newsletter is a monthly publication of Southern California Jewish Student Services, a project of Beth El Synagogue, generously funded by Allen & Deanna Alevy. Tax-deductible donations can be made to either Beach Hillel or Beth El Synagogue. Contact info: Rabbi Drew Kaplan, 562.400.5627, SoCalCampusRabbi@gmail.com.

## New Leadership Team for Beach Hillel

My wife, Rachel, the new director of Beach Hillel, and I are looking forward to guiding both Beach Hillel towards a positive direction in our first full semester at CSULB and LBCC, as well as surrounding campuses.



Rabbi Drew & Rachel Kaplan hand out menorahs at CSU-Long Beach before Hanukah.

Having moved into our new house in mid-January, just south of campus within walking distance, we have begun hosting regular Friday night Shabbat dinners for students. Although Jewlicious Festival 6.0 has been a major focus of ours, we are also programming for the new semester, including implementing a new 20 Minutes of Talmud Tuesdays at CSULB .

Although the recent rains, which flooded the entire first floor of the Student Union, including the Interfaith Center where Beach Hillel's office on campus had been located, have made us office-less, when on campus, we hope to return to one place where students can find us on campus soon.

## Night of Unity



Rachel Kaplan, Rabbi Drew, and David Abitbol, founder of Jewlicious.com, manually representing their present geographical location at Jewlicious Festival's & JConnectLA's Night of Unity.

## Apartheid Wall at UCR

SoCalJSS was at UC-Riverside for three days in a row during the first week of January to get first-hand experience with Israel-bashing on campus. The UCR group Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP) put up a wall which travels around to various campuses and had students putting forth their version of the Israel-Palestine issue.



SoCalJSS continues, in its 6th year, to monitor such things as well as to provide support for Jewish students and to stand up for Israel against the gross misrepresentation that often occurs via their propaganda that seeks to delegitimize Israel.



SoCalJSS was able to partner up with StandWithUS to provide posters and Israeli flags to Jewish students during the second of the three days of the SJP's wall.



<“Jewlicious” continued from first page>

Additionally, SoCalJSS has been involved in the planning of the Jewlicious Festival, including founding the Jewlicious Beit Midrash, and helping coordinating the educational speakers at the festival.



Rabbi Drew with students, working on promo videos for Jewlicious Festival.