

# SoCALJSS Newsletter

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## Southern California CSU Hillel Engagement Retreat

Students from Hillels at five different California State Universities (CSUs) along with a community college came together 9-11 September to learn about engagement techniques in developing Jewish life on their campuses. Hosted by CSUN Hillel and Hillel of Long Beach and West Orange County, the conference taught nearly 20 students peer-engagement methodologies used by Hillels around the globe to engage their peers and help them grow as Jews. The participants came from CSUs Northridge, Long Beach, Fullerton and San Marcos as well as San Diego State University and Los Angeles Valley College. The conference was made possible by a grant from the Jewish Federation Valley Alliance.

“Preparing these students with the skills, impetus, and support to develop and expand their social networks – building relationships with uninvolved Jewish peers and connecting them to Jewish life — are among the most successful ways we can broaden and expand the reach and impact of Jewish life on campus,” said Graham Hoffman, Associate Vice President of Strategy with Hillel: The Foundation for Jewish Campus Life, who led several sessions over the weekend.

CSUF Hillel student president, Eric Don said, “This retreat helped CSUF Hillel build a foundation that will ensure a positive future for both its members and the chapter as a whole.”

“I felt like I became very aware of resources available to me as an intern,” said Marysa Miller, a student at California State University, Long Beach. “I

was also able to learn about resources that should be available to Jewish students, in general, and how Hillel plays a role in that for students on campus. I think that being able to meet students from other Cal States was able to help me a lot in just being able to talk with other students who have been involved in other ways that I have and to bring an awareness to issues that we all face.”



**The Southern California CSU Hillels Engagement Retreat brought together student leaders from six different Hillels with which SoCalJSS collaborated**

“Helping students learn to create relationships with one another is particularly important – and challenging – among Cal State Universities, since these are commuter schools in which social and extracurricular activities compete with schoolwork, home life and jobs,” explains Rabbi Drew Kaplan of Southern California Jewish Student Services, who helped organized the event and provided the

Jewish content of the weekend.

The training took place at Camp Max Straus in Glendale and included sessions on goal-setting, program & initiative training, and exploring one’s Jewish journey.

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SHANAH TOVAH!**

# “Snapshots of a Year”

Want to get just a brief glimpse of the highlights of SoCalJSS’ activities in 2010-2011?

Now available is “Snapshots of a Year: Photographic Highlights from 2010-2011”, which features SoCalJSS’ involvement

with Southern California Hillels, major area-wide events, and its own programming, amongst others. It is available both in print, for which you can request, as well as online at

<http://SoCalJSS.org/20102011snapshotsofayear>. If you would like to browse through last year’s entire volume of newsletters, you can do so both individually at <http://SoCalJSS.org/newsletters> or in its entirety at <http://SoCalJSS.org/entire-volume-2-of-newsletter-available>.



## Gaining from Hillel Conference

Joining hundreds of Hillel professionals at the second annual Hillel Institute in St. Louis, Rabbi Drew was



enriched through his participation at the event August 1-4.

Made financially possible through the Hillel of Long Beach & West Orange County, Rabbi Drew gained important skills and ideas through meeting other Hillel professionals, generally, attending sessions with other rabbis,

meeting with other Hillel directors in Southern California and all over, as



Rabbi Drew with other rabbis at the second annual Hillel Institute in St. Louis.

well as meeting people from other organizations. Rabbi Drew especially will be taking with him the conference theme’s on stories, which he aspires to build on for this coming year.

# CSUF Hillel at DiscoverFest

Rabbi Drew was with the young Hillel group at California State University, Fullerton during their tabling at the DiscoverFest on August 31<sup>st</sup>.



## Fullerton Java & Judaism

SoCalJSS' Rabbi Drew shared with California State University, Fullerton (CSUF) students the traditions of Rosh HaShanah at a nearby Starbucks. Meeting up over coffee on September 22<sup>nd</sup>, Rabbi Drew discussed the traditions and

customs of the upcoming holiday of Rosh HaShanah



over along with apples and honey. "It is great to have young Jews who are interested in learning about their heritage," said Rabbi Drew. "It is significant for this young Hillel group to be Jewishly educated."

"Our discussion was a fun event that brought friends together for an educational event that taught us all something new," said sophomore David Rosen. "The apples were just icing on the cake."

Published ten times a year, the SoCalJSS Newsletter is a publication of Southern California Jewish Student Services (SoCalJSS). Past issues are available at <http://socialjss.org/newsletters>. To sign up to receive the SoCalJSS Newsletter via email, please visit <http://eepurl.com/hy5-/>.

SoCalJSS is an enterprise of Beth El Synagogue, a synagogue without walls, generously funded by Allen & Deanna Alevy. SoCalJSS’s mission is to facilitate Jewish living and learning, and engaging with Jewish students and other young adults in Southern California. SoCalJSS provides the only rabbi for Jewish students at California State University (CSU), Long Beach and for Long Beach Polytechnic High School’s Jewish Club, as well as the primary rabbi with the Hillel at CSU-Fullerton. SoCalJSS also provides for a rabbi to visit other schools and young adults in Orange County and the Inland Empire.

Tax-deductible donations to support the work of SoCalJSS can be made out to ‘Beth El Synagogue’ and mailed to Rabbi Drew, 3801 E. Willow Street, Long Beach, CA 90815. Rabbi Drew Kaplan can be emailed at [RabbiDrew@SoCalJSS.org](mailto:RabbiDrew@SoCalJSS.org).