

The JEWISH Proclaimer

Winter – Spring 2009 – 5769

No. 09 – 01

THE OPEN DOOR TO MORE GENERATIONS

NCEJ co-sponsor's URJ Taste of Judaism.	1
<i>Outreach activity by NCEJ grantees across U.S.:</i>	
Anchorage finds Jews, and traces of Jews.	1
Tempe finds time for outreach, here and there/	2
Tucson sets the pace for reaching out.	2
Fresno's Beth Israel peers again. Fullerton photo.	3
American Jewish U in L.A. continues full schedule.	4
More regular outreach—Los Gatos, San Diego.	4

Nothing cryptic about seeking Hispanics in Sanford	4
Steadfast gateway at URJ Northeast, in Needham.	4
Grand Rapids is a place to noahide.	5
Win 'em in Las Vegas, sew 'em up in Gastonia.	6
Greensboro's another repeater. Cleveland, too.	6
Application form for available NCEJ grants.	7
Columbus sails again, San Antonio keeps going.	8
The past surfaces in Fredericksburg, & Norfolk.	8
Shabbat America serves in Tacoma.	8

NCEJ WILL CO-SPONSOR UNION FOR REFORM JUDAISM'S TASTE COURSES

The National Center to Encourage Judaism is co-sponsoring the Union for Reform Judaism's Taste of Judaism courses in a two-year pilot project.

This should lead, in program years 2009 and 2010, to an expansion from about 18 single-synagogue and three multi-synagogue (5-8) sites a year to about 25 and five, respectively.

Taste of Judaism was begun by URJ as a three-session six-hour free course on basic Jewish concepts. It is now offered by various institutions as a primary and sometimes follow-up course, and in different forms.

While URJ makes these specific one-time grants covering advertising and staff honoraria, the hope is that synagogues will then continue offering the course on their own.

NCEJ since 1995 has been making grants to Jewish institutions for advertising this and other outreach courses. It is open to co-sponsorship inquiries from other branches of Judaism (Conservative, Reconstructionist, Orthodox) offering outreach programs.

NCEJ's own, separate grants are for half the secular press advertising costs for outreach, such as Taste-Intro-Basic Judaism or Outreach Shabbats, up to a maximum of \$1,200, with a limit of two grants a year for programs begun in distinctly different quarters.

Synagogues offering such courses on their own are also eligible for a bonus of 20% of the grant, if

they received an NCEJ grant the previous year, and for a one-time grant of \$100 for out-of-the-ordinary convert integration or welcoming efforts, such as a literature rack with pamphlets free for the taking, or distinctive welcoming approaches.

Programs limited to interfaith, and Taste programs whose costs are covered by the URJ Taste awards, are eligible for half the regular NCEJ grants.

Applications for NCEJ grants are available from our website, NCEJudaism.org, and are on page 7 of this *Jewish Proclaimer*.

Outreach Activity Around the U.S.:

JEWISH ANCHOR LAID IN ALASKA

Anchorage, Alaska—Cong. Beth Sholom (R), with a street address on Northern Lights, returns to the NCEJ grantees' list after a 10-year absence, with a Taste of Judaism minicourse that drew 17 people to start, all of them non-Jews. Three-fourths were in an interfaith relationship. Three were interested in conversion. A striking feature in the group was the number with a Jewish ancestor.

The 200-member congregation had 4 conversions in the previous year.

Follow-up sessions include a course on Bible history, and individual meetings.

Among comments:

“I have always wanted to learn more. The Bible seems to make more sense to me (the stories and interpretations) or explains it more than my Christian experiences have.”

“Christianity tends to just tell you what to think, and here they break it down, explain it and ask you to

NATIONAL CENTER TO ENCOURAGE JUDAISM, a nonprofit foundation, invites synagogues and other Jewish institutions, as a light unto the nations, to reach out to and encourage more to be Jewish. Box 651, Silver Spring, MD 20918. 301-593-2319. Fax 301-593-2249. E-mail: NCEJudaism@verizon.net. Web: www.NCEJudaism.org. This is the FIRST of two issues this year. Editor: Ash Gerecht. (209)

HAS YOUR SYNAGOGUE OBTAINED A GRANT FROM NCEJ YET? IT'S EASY TO APPLY.

think. I like that...I like how Judaism meets you where you are. Christianity always asks you to 'aspire' to a place (spiritual) that you can really never be."

-“I have simply never had the opportunity to learn about Jewish belief and find it totally fascinating.”

-“Out of all of man’s thoughts about G-d, I’m looking for the ‘base’ of what G-d thinks of and expects of man.”

-One student, who had been adopted, found out a few years ago her grandparents were Ukrainian Jews. Her 26-year-old daughter is a convert to Judaism.

-Another’s partner’s mother was Jewish.

-Another was pretty sure his grandmother, orphaned very young, was Jewish. Some family names seemed Jewish.

“Saw an ad in newspaper about class—jumped at the chance to register because I have wanted to know more about Judaism for a long time...Eager to become a part of the Jewish community...”

“I feel a door of a new spiritual world opened.”

-Another registered because of an ad in the paper “and wife asking a lot of questions.”

URJ Outreach was credited with a bonus because the temple used the NCEJ application it had supplied. Bonuses are also available to other institutional headquarters providing the form to its members.

TUCSON CONTINUES FAST PACESETTING

Tucson—Is there any synagogue in the U.S. and Canada that does more to invite and welcome newcomers than Temple Emanu-El here?

It holds a batch of Taste mini-course sessions throughout the year, has an outreach coordinator, prepares guides for the different holidays—and keeps it up. The 812-member congregation had 12 conversions in calendar 2007.

We have at hand booklets on its family programs, its outreach programs, guides to the High Holy Days, Passover and Hanukkah, its Simply Shabbat outreach services, and a 4-page calendar of its monthly Babies and Bagel club sessions for preschool-age families.

In recent data, coordinator Mila Anderson (520-327-4501) reports 464 Taste students for 2007-8, its 2nd largest enrollment.

The temple has developed a welcome card asking for contact information and interest, displayed at the main entrance and noted by greeters. After a service, greeters *seek out* newcomers individually—that beats asking them to approach board members. During the oneg, a board member stands by the welcome table with temple publications and packets.

Each new member family is matched with a madrich, one of 40 volunteers with common interests.

A Conversion Group meets quarterly—more than half come from the Taste classes.

A new program, Date Night Shabbat, offers free childcare so parents can attend a variety of grown-up service. Emanu-El is looking into setting up a year-long interfaith program in conjunction with its school and existing efforts such as Jewish Home and Family, and Simply Shabbat.

Curious about Judaism?

Explore Jewish spirituality, ethics, and community.

“A Taste of Judaism” is a free, three-session workshop open to the beginner, Jewish or not.

The next local session begins late January at Congregation Beth Sholom in Anchorage.

For information or to register, please call 907-566-3600

Co-sponsored by the Union for Reform Judaism William and Lottie Daniel Commission on Outreach and Synagogue Community

-Another felt something pulling on her heartstrings. Godparents are Jewish.

TEMPE KEEPS UP WITH THE TIMES

Tempe, AZ—Temple Emanuel (R), which schedules regular Taste courses, has 9 attend, all but one not Jewish. Four go on to the next course, Discovering Judaism, reports Executive Director Nanci Wilharber.

Among comments:

“I have greatly appreciated the opportunity to explore Judaism and dialogue with others in the small but cohesive community” of the class.

Of the 464 Taste students in this latest batch, 2/3 were not Jewish. This included 29 interested in conversion, and 7 with Jewish roots but who don't identify as Jewish. Almost 90% of the Jewish attendees were unaffiliated. 14 from Taste 2007 joined the temple's conversion group, and 46 attended other adult ed classes.

Ms Anderson observes:

-Offering Taste classes in various parts of town is critical to getting involvement.

-The administrator conducts continuing follow-ups.

-Key to program success is "in lowering barriers to participation." Classes have an open, comfortable atmosphere. The program "is an incredibly valuable tool to help interfaith couples begin to explore Jewish options at their own pace. Additionally, with more people now examining different religions and searching for a spiritual home, Taste provides the ideal environment for learning about and experiencing Judaism for the first time. Often these searches result in conversion to Judaism..."

For Outreach Shabbat, "the detailed handout that people can take home and read through later has been very helpful."

Among many good student comments:

-“Family members (father’s side) go back a long ways & are Jewish.

-“We found out that two branches of our family were Jewish.”

-“I grew up in a very nonobservant home...”

-“My Bible study group thought it would enhance our understanding of the life & times of the Bible’s peoples; my son is dating a Jewish young lady.”

-“I have always been interested in Judaism but I haven’t known any Jews who are religious who could answer my questions...”

-“I had been thinking about learning more about the Jewish religion for 10-15 years...”

-“I have been thinking or feeling called to conversion for many years...I love Jewish ‘liturgy’ & prayers. Hebrew speaks to my soul!”

-“I was born & raised a Protestant but have never been able to connect to these beliefs.”

-“Our son is marrying a Jewish girl, our grandchildren will be Jewish.”

-“I worked for a Jewish woman in California and talked to her about rituals, holidays, etc. Judaism

seems like a ‘code of values.’ I was raised Catholic.”

-“I’m not Jewish, my husband is Jewish, but he grew up in a secular home and when I ask him questions he doesn’t know the answers. We’re going to try to come to Tot Shabbat.”

-“I came to Taste of Judaism last year and I came to Hanukkah and some Shabbats. I think I’m ready to talk to Rabbi (Benjamin) Sharff about conversion.”

ALL NON-JEWS AT FRESNO CLASS

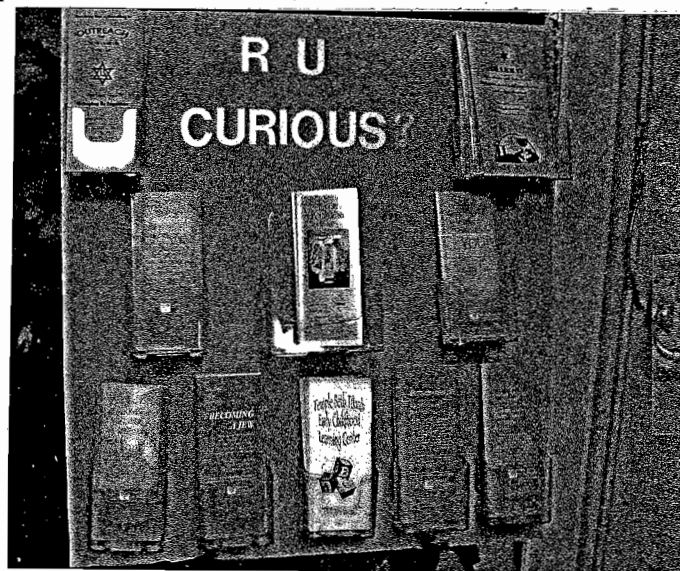
Fresno, CA—Temple Beth Israel (R), last heard from a decade ago, holds a Taste of Judaism course attended by 23, all of them not Jewish. Two were interested in converting.

The synagogue reports 11 conversions the preceding year.

Follow-up is an Introduction course taught by Rabbi Robert Ourach, which he’s conducted yearly since 2003. There’s no charge.

FULLERTON BROCHURES RIGHT AT DOOR

Fullerton, CA—Outreach co-chairs Tom and Tracy Green maintain a full schedule of activities at Temple Beth Tikvah (R), with a rack of brochures right at the entrance. The portable R U Curious rack travels to community events, such as the Israel Fair, to promote outreach there, too.



With help from the Jewish Federation of Orange County, the Q&A list includes Shabbat, High Holy Days, Chanukah, Passover, and a trifold one-page Outreach explanation.

Beth Tikvah receives a 20% bonus for having won an NCEJ grant the previous year.

**IF YOUR SYNAGOGUE SUCCEEDS IN OUTREACH
IT WILL WIN IN MEMBERSHIP AND IN-REACH**

The 240+ member temple had 4 conversions the past year. Of 38 attending its Taste course, about 2/3 were not Jewish, and about 1/3 were interested in converting.

Among student comments:

-"Get the word out more! Reach out as much as possible!"

-Agreeing, another suggested publications of younger groups: "There is interest out there with the younger generation too."

-Several wanted a doubling to a 6-week course, and more time for questions and discussion, perhaps an e-mail thread inviting and answering questions.

-"Appreciate the punctuality of the sessions and the rabbi's (Kenneth Milhandler) personality."

-"Enjoy getting to see the Torah," say a number.

AMERICAN JEWISH U. CLASSES GO ON

Los Angeles—American Jewish U. holds more of its regular series of Introduction programs in the area, for Conservative synagogues.

In the latest batch, it reports 454 students, 310 of them non-Jews, 182 interested in converting, in the 63-hour program. Fees are \$18 registration, \$308 for one, \$479 for a couple.

Newest follow-up program, begun by Rabbi Neal Weinberg in 2007, Judaism by Choice, includes a learning service monthly, preceded by a dinner.

The Skirball Museum offers a 1 ½ hour tour just for students.

LOS GATOS OPENS MORE DOORS

Los Gatos, CA—Cong. Shir Hadash (R) holds Taste programs consistently, and gains our 20% bonus for having been a grantee the previous year.

Attendance at the latest two reported is 35, ¾ not Jewish. The 593-member congregation had 6 conversions in the preceding year.

Among student comments:

-"Even though I have had no religious training, my mother was Jewish and I feel Jewish. It seems to be a part of me."

One registered to give Judaism "one more chance" after negative memories of Hebrew school.

SAN DIEGO UJF SHOWS UNITED WAY

San Diego—Would that more Federations across the U.S. would get involved with outreach, as the UJF here does. Its latest Taste courses—4 of I and 3 of II—drew a split—48 Jews and 51 non, with 1/3 of the group in interfaith relationships and a tenth interested in converting.

This is the Jewish High Holy Day Season

A great time to get

A TASTE OF JUDAISM



Join us for this free, 3-session introduction to Jewish customs, values and ethics.

Reconnect with your Jewish roots, or learn something about your Jewish neighbors.

Tuesdays from 7 – 9 pm September 18, 25 and October 2 at Congregation Shir Hadash (Reform).

For more information contact Patty at patty@shirhadash.org or 408-358-1751 x7.

שיר הדאש

Congregation Shir Hadash
20 Cherry Blossom Lane, Los Gatos

Students who wanted more sessions were encouraged to take some of the more comprehensive courses offered in San Diego.

While the UJF offers both a Taste I & II, new coordinator Rachel Kitt wonders if there's room for a III, or a specific Taste for interfaith relationships.

The NCEJ grant, she says, "supports our ability to keep this important class available, to encourage our community members to learn more and get involved... Appreciate your long partnership..."

GROUP SEEKS HISPANICS RETURN

Sanford, FL—Aliyah Sepharad International, here, is subject of story in Orlando Sentinel (9/9/08), for helping Hispanics of Jewish ancestry return to their roots and make aliyah.

Group leader, Rabbi Gary Fernandez, grew up as a Christian. A recognized obstacle to group's spread is that while some have converted to Judaism, others want to hold on to their current religion as well, the article reports.

URJ NORTHEAST IS STEADFAST GATEWAY

Needham, MA—URJ Northeast Council continues its regular series of Taste classes.

The Spring 2008 list of 7 courses drew an average of 18 students, about a fifth interested in converting.

Outreach coordinator Joyce Schwartz points to one class, at Temple Beth Avodah in Newton, where 20 signed in.

Among their stories:

-"I was raised Episcopalian and married a Jewish man. After learning about religion in school our 11-year-old asked if he could learn about Judaism and

DOES YOUR SIGNAGE SAY—IT SHOULD-- ALL ARE WELCOME? PUT ON A SMILEY FACE.

A Taste of
Judaism:
ARE YOU CURIOUS?

explore
spirituality, ethics & community

Free classes being taught by Reform Rabbis
for the beginner - Jewish or not.

To register: 781.449.0404 or jschwartz@urj.org

www.reformjewishoutreachboston.org

Reform Jewish Outreach is supported by a grant from Combined Jewish Philanthropies and the George and Beatrice Sherman Charitable Trust

have a Bar Mitzvah. I hope to begin my own Jewish education so I can support my son."

"I was born in Spain and raised Catholic. Since living in the U.S. I have learned that I have Jewish ancestors. My family was part of the 'hidden Jews' in Spain. I am now on a spiritual journey."

"We are an interfaith couple who have raised Jewish children but now we want to learn how to celebrate Judaism as we grow older."

About 60% of participants contact the Council by phone or e-mail after seeing secular newspaper ads, Ms Schwartz reports. Many visit its website, too.

She adds: "By realizing the value of a welcoming, low-threshold gateway to the Jewish community, NCEJ truly encourages the awakening of Jewish souls."

In Fall 2008 the council offered 4 classes, and plans 7 for the first half of 2009.

Among fall class comments:

"I grew up in Columbia with a Jewish Columbian father and Catholic, Mexican mother. My parents kept their Judaism to themselves and decided to give their children nothing...After moving to America and marrying my husband who is a Russian Jew did I want a religion for myself and my children. I realize that I identify more with Judaism but I know nothing about it."

"I grew up Catholic but never felt very connected to the religion. I did however enjoy the sense of community I got from the church. I have been personally searching for a religion that fits. I am seriously dating a Jewish man and am considering conversion."

"I grew up in the former Soviet Union and my only sense of Judaism was how people reacted to me as a Jew (which was not good.) I want to understand why people felt this way so I have been on a journey

to learn more about Judaism. I am currently dating a man of another faith and we are both exploring Judaism together (my boyfriend is also taking this class.)"

"My husband was raised in a conservative Jewish family and I was raised in a Methodist family. As I've distanced myself from the church, I'm interested in learning more about Judaism on my own terms. It sounds like the 'Introduction to Judaism' course would be next."

About a fifth of the non-Jewish Taste graduates began their journey to conversion and affiliation after taking the Taste class, Ms Schwartz reports.

GRAND RAPIDS INTRO FLOWS SMOOTHLY

Grand Rapids, MI—Cong. Ahavas Israel, with 135 members (6 conversions in the past year), is one of the relatively few Conservative synagogues with regular Introduction programs reporting to us. Would there were more, on this vast frontier of potential for more Jews.

Its \$75 20-week Introduction course draws 10 students, "very serious," just one-third not Jewish. Five are interested in converting.

Its Hebrew Reading & Comprehension 26-week course, at \$150, attracts 15, mostly Christians wanting to read the Bible in Hebrew.

A 10-week course, Walking with God (\$50), has 2 students—non-Jews not interested in converting, but regular attendees at Shabbat morning services.

Judaism - a 3500 year old tradition
Congregation Ahavas Israel invites you
to learn with us. Live a meaningful life.

2727 Michigan St. N.E. 616-949-2840

NEW! • Spirituality Sampler, Thursday, November 15, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.
 Connect the mind, the body, and the spiritual self using Yoga, Meditation, and Hasidic text study. Yoga will be led by Carolyn Heines owner of The Yoga Studio. Meditation will be led by George Burgoyne a certified Jewish Meditation instructor. Text study will be taught by Rabbi Krishef, based on materials from the Jewish Institute of Spirituality.

Year long courses, Monday evenings, beginning October 15, 2007

- Hebrew Reading and Comprehension - Beginning, 8:20 - 9:30 p.m.
- Hebrew Reading and Comprehension - Advanced Beginning, 7:00 - 8:10 p.m.
- Judaism's Response to Atheism, 7:00 - 8:10 p.m.

Winter Course, Monday Evenings beginning January 7, 2008

- Introduction to Judaism, 7:00 - 8:10 p.m.
- Walking With God, 8:20 - 9:30 p.m.

Call 616-949-2840 or see AhavasIsraelGR.org
for a complete course guide and registration information.

The congregation continues its B'nai Noah affiliation category, and its practice of a free-book rack, with optional-donation cards.

LAS VEGAS TEMPLE WINS AGAIN

Henderson, NV—Cong. Ner Tamid (R) in this Las Vegas suburb returns for another NCEJ grant,

The 670-member synagogue had at least four conversions in the past year, reports assistant Karen Levine. Sixtyone students attended its spring '08 Taste course, ¾ of them not Jewish.

"A Taste of Judaism"**Are You Curious?**

Offered at Congregation Ner Tamid, get a modern Reform Jewish perspective on Jewish life.

3-Class Series**Mondays****April 28****May 5****May 12****7-9 pm**

- * Basic philosophy of Judaism
- * Meanings of Jewish Holidays and customs
- * Understanding of Jewish community and organizations

Open to Beginners - Jewish or Not!



Free but space is limited!

To register, please call 702.632.2288



Sponsored by Bradley, Rebecca and Elizabeth Alm Snyder Scholarship Fund

GASTONIA SEWS UP ANOTHER ONE

Gastonia, NC—Temple Emanuel (R), lay-led, with 70 members, holds its fifth consecutive Taste class. In 2007, it drew 45, and in 2008, 32. Majorities were not Jewish, reports adult ed chair Dr. Mark Epstein. Some were Jews who had not been involved with the Jewish community for years; one has joined the congregation.

Emanuel provides the framework and resources for conversion study, and works with Temple Beth-El in Charlotte on the conversion process.

The Taste class "has been the singular most successful program in Gastonia to bring Jews and non-Jews to Judaism," Dr. Epstein says. The temple

also "offers weekly Mussar classes, Sunday participation in Triologue with Christian and Muslim communities, and adult Hebrew classes.

GREENSBORO REPEATS JUDAISM 101

Greensboro, NC—Beth David Synagogue (C) holds its Judaism 101 course again, for 35 students, 4/5 of them not Jewish. Fee is \$36 for six sessions at the 410-member synagogue. Executive Director Wendy Rothstein reports 15 conversions in the past year. There's a mikveh on the property.

CLEVELAND CONSORTIUM PULLS 170

Cleveland—Jewish Education Center and the Board of Rabbis hold the Taste course in four locations in Fall 2007, including Kent State U, for a total of 80 students.

Winter sessions were in 2 locations, with 50 at Temple Israel Ner Tamid and 40 at Beth Israel.

A Feast of Judaism was scheduled after that, for 6 sessions.)

Advertising cost for the 6 classes was over \$5,000. Ads in the metro and Saturday religious sections bring the biggest response. Ads also go into zone-specific community newspapers. Preschools get flyers targeted at interfaith families just beginning to identify.

A Taste of Judaism

Are You Curious?

Designed for the Beginner . . . Jewish or Not

When your appetite . . . a free, three-evening exploration of a modern Jewish perspective on living in today's complicated world . . .

Jewish Spirituality, Ethics, and Community.

Wednesdays: Feb. 13th, 20th & 27th, 2008
7:00-9:00 p.m. Temple Emanuel

320 South St., Gastonia
(corner of South and 3rd Ave.)

Open to the Community and Free of Charge

Limited space available - pre-registration required.
To register online: tasteofjudaism@templemanuelgastonia.org
If no email, call 704-561-9442

Deadline is Friday, February 8, 2008.

For the community...Jewish or not**"Feast of Judaism"**

Explore Lifecycle, Holidays, Israel, God, the Prayerbook, and the Jewish Calendar Year

Six Evening Classes
East Side Location
March 12, 19, April 2, 9, 16, 23
West Side Location
March 13, 20, 27, April 3, 10, 17
Mentor Location
March 12, 19, April 2, 9, 16, 23

FREE CLASS - REGISTRATION REQUIRED

Contact Sherri Kaufman
Jewish Education Center of Cleveland
216-371-0446 - www/jecc.org/outreach



Co-Sponsored by The Jewish Education Center of Cleveland and the Cleveland Board of Rabbis with funding support from the Jewish Education Center of Cleveland

One couple wanted "to establish a relationship with a rabbi, explore Judaism, and find out if conversion is or is not right with them." After the fall class, the woman began study with a Conservative rabbi.

Sixty attended the Feast course, over half of them not Jewish.

NATIONAL CENTER TO ENCOURAGE JUDAISM -- APPLICATION, 2008-2009

Box 651, Silver Spring, MD 20918 - 301-593 - 2319 - Fax 301-593-2249 - E-mail: NCEJudaism@verizon.net

We help you let your broad community know all are welcome to learn about Judaism and become Jewish. NCEJ grants, to synagogues, consortia, agencies, regional offices, etc., for 2008-2009 programs, are for a maximum of \$1200 up to one-half the cost of the secular (non-Jewish) press or media advertising. Individual synagogue grantees may win a 20% bonus atop a yearly basic grant, if you received an NCEJ ad grant the previous year, for a \$1440 maximum. Local sponsors of such courses limited to interfaith students (& 2008-2010 URJ Taste grant recipients, since NCEJ is now a co-sponsor of those grants) are eligible for half a regular grant. You are eligible for two grants yearly for separate programs in distinctly different quarters. Grants are at NCEJ's sole discretion.

Eligible courses are two types: 1) Introduction to Judaism, Taste of Judaism, Basic Judaism, or similar classes. 2) Adult Education classes of interest to prospective converts--these ads must state, "Open to All" or "Open to Jews and non-Jews." **Ineligible** are such ads as: Institutional, High Holy Day, Shabbat or Shabbaton, membership, Hebrew, Chanukah, Passover, cooking, dancing, or lectures not of interest or help to prospective converts. Aborted programs are ineligible.

Send in your completed applications after your program starts. **Include demographic information and class reaction** as requested; a copy of the ads (for radio/tv, of text) and of the specific billing. We welcome students' and your comments.

[For course grants, complete Sections (1) & (2); Outreach Shabbat grants, Secs. (1) & (3).]

(1) Organization _____ Cong. membership numbers _____ Date _____
 (___ Reform ___ Conservative ___ Reconstruction ___ Orthodox ___ Mix of: _____ No affiliation _____

Address _____ City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____ Fax _____ E-mail: _____

Web? _____ Contact(Rab-Ctr-ExD-Adm-Coord-Pres-Chr) & Title _____

Ads ran in these venues _____

Dates run _____ Size of ads _____ Total print/air cost of ads _____

How many conversions at your synagogue/consortium/institution (specify) last secular\ religious year? _____

PROGRAM BONUSES FOR SYNAGOGUES: Award winners are eligible for up to a 20% one-time bonus for each new initiative for ongoing out-of-the-ordinary welcoming/convert-encouraging activities, at NCEJ's discretion. Supply detailed documentation; cursory response doesn't qualify. Examples:

___ You actively welcome attendees at oneg shabbat/kiddush with more than such routines as bima announcements or colored cups; rabbi & board take part. ___ You operate programs to integrate interfaith & converts. More than Dec. dilemma-type sessions or monthly interfaith--what others can learn from and copy. Details. ___ You supply numerous free pamphlets/booklets on becoming Jewish. You must have a rack or table in an open area, with pamphlets free for the taking any time. Details necessary. Send us the list, and copies of any you yourself have prepared.

(2) COURSE TITLE _____ Date held _____ Fee (Members/non) _____

Course length: _____ # Students: _____ (Numbers or %:) Members _____ Nonmembers _____ Jews _____ Non-Jews _____

In interfaith relationship _____ Interested in converting _____ Your comments on class makeup?

Student comments on class (especially desired; use separate sheet):

What follow-up programs & contacts do you have?

Your thoughts/suggestions in general about classes, alternatives, follow-ups to increase conversion (separate sheet):

(3) OUTREACH SHABBAT (Mainly prospective-member events ineligible.) Add details on a separate sheet.

Title of your event? _____ When held? _____

Attendance: Your estimate of number of members _____ Of nonmembers _____ Usual attendance: _____

Did you include: Explanations _____ Information on classes, or conversion? _____ Have pamphlets available? _____

Describe how you made this different from your usual service _____

Would you hold this service again? _____ When? _____ How would you change it? _____

What advice to other synagogues planning such an event? _____

Closing the year, students of both Taste and Feast had a tour of the Maltz Museum of Jewish Heritage.

The JEC finds that it can get good rates at smaller community papers by doing multiple ads, so it's expanded to outlying areas.

COLUMBUS RETURNS AFTER NINE YEARS

Columbus, OH—Congregational trio—Temples Israel, Beth Sholom, Cong. Beth Tikvah—hold Taste courses Mon-Tues-Wed, and draw a total of 103 students. Israel, with 650 members, last received a grant from us in 1999. Beth Sholom has about 500 members, and Beth Tikvah, about 530.

SAN ANTONIO, AGAIN & AGAIN & AGAIN

San Antonio—Temple Beth-El (R) illustrates the value of consistency. It's been holding outreach programs for years, and getting continuing mentions in *The Jewish Proclaimer*.

The latest report from the 1117-member temple has 30 attending a Taste course, all but one not Jewish. It continues with an Intro course, and adult Hebrew.

TASTE IS RELATIVE IN FREDERICKSBURG

Fredericksburg, VA—Beth Sholom Temple (R) returns after a 3-year absence to the NCEJ grantee list, with its Taste class registration indicating that a good many show some Jewish relative connection, with others displaying curiosity about Christianity's Jewish roots.

Thirty attended, all but four non-Jews. Six showed interest in converting. The 110-member temple, in Washington exurbia, had 3 conversions in the preceding year. Its application was on a URJ form, which results in a bonus credit to URJ Outreach.

Among student comments:

—"I feel convinced that I am going in the right direction by asking for conversion."

—"My husband's father was Jewish...The Jewish religion you have introduced us to is much more

flexible than the Baptist religion I was raised in."

—"It is wonderful to see a religion that teaches kindness to one another."

—"More aware of the similarities in spirit between Judaism and the faith in my heart."

—"Learned a lot about the things you can't always learn from books. Even more inclined to become Jewish. This feels even more like home."

—"Searching for spiritual tranquility." (Father was Jewish.)

NORFOLK FINDS STUDENTS WANT MORE

Norfolk, VA—Cong. Beth El (C), a new NCEJ grantee, finds students in its Judaism 101 6-week course wanting more than a 3-week Taste, and willing to pay for it--\$36 for nonmembers, free to members.

Fortyseven attended, more than half of them not Jewish, and all but 4 not members.

"It was interesting to discover Jewish connections throughout the course from non-affiliated Jews and family members. By request we did an add-on session 3 weeks later to which 20 people came," says Rabbi Susan Tendler of the 625-member synagogue.

Three students were interested in converting—one, after 20 years in an interfaith marriage.

In Spring 2008, the synagogue held a Judaism 101 Shabbat, attended by 150 rather than the usual 100.

SHABBAT/AMERICA & TASTE IN TACOMA

Tacoma, WA—Temple Beth El (R) draws 55 to its Taste course, with 80% not Jewish. About a tenth were interested in converting.

Its Shabbat Across America service attracted over 100. Next time, the 300-member synagogue says, it would cater the event, and explain more of the service.

The Jewish Proclaimer is mailed to over 4500 Jewish synagogues & institutions this issue.

**NATIONAL CENTER
TO ENCOURAGE JUDAISM**

Box 651

Silver Spring, MD 20918

Winter - Spring 2009-5769

No. 09-01

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
SOUTHERN, MD.
PERMIT NO. 1906

We can invite others to learn about Judaism.
We can encourage them, if they choose, to become Jewish.
We can help you reach out to others.
Being positive about our beliefs strengthens others.
Flexing our beliefs strengthens us all.