

Institutions / Colleges

The Jewish Arab Center for Peace, Givat Haviva

Student Perspective

Gordon College of Education, Haifa

Kaye College of Education, Ashklon

Ulpan Akiva, Netanya

Beit Berl, Kefar-Saba

The Jewish-Arab Center for Peace — Givat Haviva

Dr. Sara Ozacky-Lazar, Mr. Riad Kabha, Directors

Our Mission

The Jewish-Arab Center for Peace was established in 1963 by the Givat Haviva Institute for Advanced Studies of the Kibbutz Artzi Federation. The aims were to foster closer relations between the Jews and Arabs in Israel, to educate for mutual understanding, and to promote partnership between the two communities.

The Center works in a variety of ways, and in an effort to promote true equality amongst all the citizens of the State. This is accomplished through constant critical examination of the existing reality, and by striving for renewal and change.

The Center functions within the spirit of humanism and in the belief that all human beings are equal in both dignity and worth. It strives to lead the way to the realization of democracy and civil equality between the Jewish and Palestinian citizens of Israel; to

create social and cultural pluralism in the country; and to achieve reconciliation and peace amongst the nations in the region.

The Center initiates innovative models for the advancement of its educational and social aims, and operates by way of encounters, dialogue, partnership, study and research.

The Staff of the Center, both Jewish and Arab, are committed to act to the best of their abilities in the spirit of this mission, and to the attainment of our shared goals.

The difficult, painful and frustrating events which took place towards the end of the year 2000 have strengthened our conviction and caused us to intensify our efforts towards reaching our goals, and increase our activity amongst community activists, school principals and teachers, heads of local authorities—as the alternative to coexistence is unthinkable.

Meeting Our Goals

Several common elements are prevalent within the framework of the projects and programs at the Jewish-Arab Center for Peace:

- an ongoing effort to improve the relations between Israel's Arab and Jewish citizens.
- an endeavor to promote the principles of democracy, equality and citizenship.
- a genuine desire to build the bridges of cooperation with Israel's Arab neighbors. The Center confronts the social and cultural challenges that face Israeli society, with an emphasis on the inequality between Arabs and Jews. Each of the departments at the JACP engages in a particular area of specialization: education, language instruction, research, counseling and community work. Overall, the

Center reaches out to many sectors of society: children, teens and adults.

Our professional, dedicated staff consists of about 35 educators and various freelance facilitators. Each year, well over 25,000 people, mostly from Israel, participate in the programming. At the same time, senior staff members attend programs, conferences and workshops in Israel and abroad, delivering the Center's message worldwide and returning with new-found insights and expertise.

Highlights in 2000

Children Teaching Children At Expo 2000

Children Teaching Children was selected to be showcased at **Expo 2000** in Hanover, Germany. "Humankind — Nature — Technology: A New World Arising" was the theme of **Expo 2000**, held in Hanover, Germany from June 1 to October 31, 2000. ***Children Teaching Children*** was

one of the very first projects from all over the world chosen by the organizers of **Expo 2000**, in the framework of "Global Dialogue — International Projects". The projects exhibited in the "Humankind" pavilion, and on the **Expo 2000** website, illustrated the most diverse approaches to a more conflict-free existence together. Visitors to the pavilion were repeatedly involved in the exhibition, interactively...and came to realize that it is humankind itself, with its unique capacity to develop utopias and visions, that was the main focus of the exhibition.

In addition, all through 2000 ***Children Teaching Children*** continued to be featured at the Millennium Village, Epcot Center, Disneyworld, Florida.

"Crossing Borders" Israeli-Palestinian-Jordanian Youth Magazine

"Crossing Borders", a regional bi-monthly Israeli — Palestinian —

Jordanian magazine in English, began publication in February 2000, under the auspices of the Danish organization DANIDA and with the participation of the Jewish-Arab Center for Peace at Givat Haviva, The Palestinian Peace Information Center and Medmedia/ JEMSTONE. The magazine is printed in 25,000 copies, and distributed in 20 Israeli Arab schools, 40 Israeli Jewish schools, 60 Palestinian schools and about 20 Jordanian schools.

Approximately 100 youth from the four sectors participate in the project. The participants meet for editing work prior to each issue. A joint journalism workshop was held in the summer, which contributed greatly to the achievement of the objectives of getting to know each other personally and reducing the stereotypes, as well as learning journalism skills.

"Drishat Shalom" - Greetings of Peace

In honor of the 50th anniversary of

Givat Haviva, and based on the belief that the power of art can build bridges between cultures and lessen the gaps, we contacted artists from all disciplines, religions and cultures to send their own personal ***Greetings of Peace*** on postcards. The artists were asked to express their wishes through words, drawings, paintings, musical notes and any other artistic means. The more than 800 postcards received were framed and showcased at a special exhibition at the Peace Gallery, in the Arts Center at Givat Haviva from April through June 2000. A full-color poster highlighting the exhibition was also produced. Beginning in November 2000 the exhibit began a tour of Switzerland, and will then move throughout Israel and around the rest of the world.

The ***Greetings of Peace*** project has important implications. Each postcard represents a very personal appeal — a sincere, genuine desire calling for peace amongst nations, peace amongst neighbors. ***Drishat Shalom*** brings with it a strong social

message for a better world. **We believe that art is the direct bridge between conflict, dialogue and co-existence.**

The exhibit can also be viewed on our website at www.dialogate.org.il.

Cultivating Continuous Dialogue With Israeli and Palestinian Youth Through The Internet With Trained Counselors

This program trained a core group of youth counselors from various youth movements in the Gaza Strip and their neighbors inside Israel from the area of the Regional Council of Eshkol (which lies on the border of the Gaza Strip) to run long-term Israeli-Palestinian dialogue programs for youth with a focus on using the Internet System as a bridge between the two sides. The project, in partnership between the Jewish-Arab Center for Peace at Givat Haviva and the Palestinian Dialogue Center, brought about an acquaintance between the two sides on personal, cultural and political

levels; led to a deepening of the understanding regarding the complexity of the conflict by means of personal stories and positions of the Israeli and Palestinian participants; provided the possibility to have personal relationships with the help of computers in a manner not dependent upon the organizers of the project or the political situation; offered a comprehensive clarification of values such as democracy, equality, justice, negotiations, tolerance, compromise, co-existence, etc; led the youth to development of expertise in dealing with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Meeting Face to Face — Jewish and Arab Students

The program brings together Jewish and Arab students both on the high school and on the university level, for a series of workshops designed to enable them to confront their stereotypes and difficulties in accepting people whose views and background are different from their own.

The project provides an open atmosphere where Jewish and Arab students can discuss the complexities of the Jewish-Arab conflict; strengthens each group's individual and collective identities and creates a dialogue that is based on an understanding of these institutions; teaches conflict management skills that can help the students cope with this conflict; encourages both groups of students to become agents of promoting coexistence through the implementation of joint projects in their communities.

Dialogue

Three years ago at a professional summer course, two school principals met: a Jewish principal from a school in Tel Aviv, and an Arab principal from the town of Iblin in the Galilee, in the north of Israel. The two became friends, and decided to have the teaching staffs of both schools meet. Over the course of three years the Jewish and Arab teachers got together, sometimes in Tel Aviv

and sometimes in Iblin. These were exemplary meetings: they held discussions, had various cultural activities in large and small groups, ate together and went out together for joint social activities — and it seemed as if the walls had come down and a real relationship of social and cultural co-existence had been formed.

And then came the violent outbreaks of this past October — and it became clear that the reality is completely different. Feelings of fear, of frustration, of disappointment broke to the surface — and the meetings stopped.

A few weeks ago the principals called Givat Haviva, told us about the relations in the past between the teachers of the two schools, and requested a get-together of a new kind. All the meetings up till now, they said, had been of culture and folklore; but for some reason — maybe out of a fear of not “letting sleeping dogs lie” — they had never tried to grapple with the real and painful problems of each of the

two sides, the source of which is in the civic, cultural and political reality in Israel and in the region. Now they understand that it is impossible to escape reality, and since Givat Haviva is recognized for its expertise in running workshops in conflict management, they need our help.

The encounter took place at Givat Haviva last weekend. At the beginning there was tension between the two sides. The wariness of the teachers against an outbreak that would lead to an explosion, after which it would be impossible to hold any activity at all, could be felt in the air. It was difficult to open up to each other after such harsh events. There were those who were simply afraid to speak, there were those who made harsh accusations, there were those who justified themselves and there were those who expressed a feeling of no way out and despair. Slowly, after the first stage in which the harsh feelings, the fears, the disappointments

and the frustrations were expressed, the teachers got onto a course of organized work. Innumerable problems related to the conflict between the two peoples came up, but no less than these, the problems arising from the multi-cultural reality existing within each one of the ethnic groups. Every discussion left many more questions than answers in its wake, as well as a growing feeling that the dialogue must continue — since the alternative is a complete disaster.

True, at the end of the encounter there was no atmosphere of harmony, but an achievement was made of paramount

importance: everyone was in agreement on the desire to continue the encounters, to no longer run away from the true problems which are painful to all, each one to learn to listen to the distress of the other, and to look for methods of cooperation in the future.

At the end of the workshop the teachers made two decisions: one, to hold three more joint weekend seminars at Givat Haviva and to continue to jointly build methods to grapple on the personal, social and national plane with the difficult reality in which we live. Second, to build together workshops for face-to-

face encounters for their students, which will take place at Givat Haviva and be facilitated by Givat Haviva's staff.

"We have no guarantee that we will succeed in coping with the problems arising from the harsh reality," the teachers said. "We are sure that at the end of the series of our encounters, we will remain with more questions than answers. However, we cannot run from grappling with the problems and seeking a way towards life together despite the difficult conflicts — neither on our own personal level, nor in our educational work with our students."

January 2001

Student Perspective: Being a Citizen in the State of Israel, Givat Haviva

Doron Gueta

A group of twelfth grade students from the ORT "Megadim" High School in Carmiel spent December 12-13, 2000 at Givat Haviva, at a seminar entitled "*Being a Citizen in the State of Israel*," facilitated by the Counseling Center for Peace Education. The following story was written by one of the students, **Doron Gueta**.

One day, a day which was supposed to be fine and sunny — as promised by the charming weather forecaster on television — turned out to be rainy and cold. Fog covered the land, and the air was full of cold wind. This was the day that students of the twelfth grade went out to a two-day seminar at Givat Haviva.

My excitement in advance of this day arose from the fact that it wasn't forced on us. Participation was left up to our free choice, which was really something new and exciting. I knew that this time we would be participating in an activity not as a "herd" forced to

go wherever the shepherd took us, but as a group of people whose only desire is to learn, to be educated. And there was another novelty in this seminar: not like in school, this time we were going to deal with subjects that touch all of us, and not just hear but be heard as to how we feel about them.

Indeed, my expectations about the weather were disappointed — but not my expectations regarding the seminar.

First, I must admit that the hospitality we received at Givat Haviva was among the best that students get on trips and tours outside of school. But the most important, of course, was the seminar itself:

When we arrived we were formed into small groups; each group had a meeting room of its own. The first question we were asked was not why we came to the seminar, but why we **chose** to come. Of course there were cynical answers, like: "In order

to miss school," or "Just to get away from home." But in the end it was clear that most of the participants came out of a feeling that we cannot, especially in these days of such serious crisis in Israel and the region, miss the opportunity which has been given to us to deal with the most painful and burning subjects which determine the framework of our life in this land.

The subjects we dealt with were: acceptance of the other and the difference in the society close to us, characterized by a multitude of conflicts — veterans in Israel as opposed to new immigrants from Russia and Ethiopia, Jews and Arabs, Ashkenazim and Oriental Jews...is there discrimination in our country? Who is an Israeli? Is Israel a democratic state? And we even dealt with the most talked about subject in Israel today — peace!

We broke up into three groups, each one representing a different class or ethnic group. Each group tried to embody and



illustrate the daily life of the social sector it was representing, and in relation to the other groups. And here it turns out that a certain group, defining itself as belonging to the upper echelons of society — both economically as well as socially and ethnically — demonstrated a patronizing attitude to the other groups! Is this a natural situation that cannot be changed? Heated arguments broke out among us. There were differences in approach and opinions, but on one matter there were no disagreements: we all received important and sensitive food for thought. Suddenly we became aware of things that we had never formed

an opinion on before, and it will suffice if I mention the following fact: did you know that even today, in Israel, there are close to thirty Arab villages that don't have basic infrastructure arrangements like water, electricity, sewage, etc.?

At the conclusion of the seminar we all felt that something had happened, that a change had

overcome us. This was a seminar with content and significance that will remain inscribed in the memories of the participants for a long time...

We have long since forgotten the stormy weather. What is etched in our memory is the sun, the sun of awareness and thought that broke out from amongst the large, gray clouds.



Gordon College of Education, Haifa

Dr. Rhonda Sofer

During the 1999-2000 academic year, Gordon College of Education has run several programs that contribute to the ideals and values of ASPnet in Israel. First the Global Village project established multicultural groups in which Jewish, Moslem, Christian and Druse students worked together to build a village which would be a model of co-existence and Human Rights. These students created a village which they believe would make the world a better place to live in in terms of these values as well as in terms of caring for the ecology.

In addition, Gordon College, through The Multicultural Educational Resource Center (MERC), offered 14 courses within the trend of Teaching in a Multicultural Society. These courses are aimed at providing our students, the future teachers of Israel with tools to work and teach in a multicultural society. Approximately 500 students took part in these courses.

In order to understand the nature of Israel's multicultural society, another program of integrating college education field trips with multicultural topics was implemented. Fifteen field trips for students included learning about different aspects of Israel's multicultural society. Hundreds of the college's students from different years and specialization departments, benefited from this program.

In December 1999, Gordon College through MERC organized a National Conference on the topic of Women in a Multicultural Society. Hundreds of educators and students attended this conference in which different aspects of being a woman in a multicultural society were presented by experts in the field.

The 1999-2000 was an important year for Gordon College in terms of implementing in grammar schools, a learning program aimed

at promoting tolerance and acceptance of others. Three different educational trends: Tali, Religious and Secular classes, were provided with the learning program and materials. A consultant and evaluation team from Gordon College guided and assessed the results of these programs. Over 170 children participated in this program.

In summary, over one thousand people: children, students, teachers, and educators participated in programs at Gordon College of Education aimed at furthering pluralistic values of tolerance, mutual respect and co-existence.

Multiculturalism at Kaye College of Education, Ashklon

Dr. Riva Levenchuk

Kaye College of Education in Beer-Sheva is currently the Negev's leading academic institute for teaching and educator training.

The College is characterized by its social-educational involvement in the community, by its training of Jewish and Bedouin populations alike, by increasing mutual understanding between the sectors, by reducing prejudice and stereotypical perceptions, and by taking responsibility for the professional development of the region's personnel.

In its daily operations, Kaye College serves as an example of a combined Jewish-Arab educational system. The College maintains contacts with affiliated schools in the Jewish and Bedouin sectors, is a partner in regional programs of holistic interventions in a number of Negev settlements, and also responds to appeals of Negev schools through providing advice or assistance, and by providing professional guidance to educational activities.

The teaching program permits discussions concerning education and didactic issues to be held. In addition, it includes interactions in which every individual in the group presents himself and his cultural world, joint preparation of lesson and learning materials, work in schools in Jewish-Arab teams, and field-trips to a variety of schools in both sectors. The aim of the field-trips is to become cognizant of the unique aspects of each sector's society and culture as well as of the society to which we all belong.

THE CO-EXISTENCE PROJECT

The "co-existence" project has been operating in the college for about 10 years. This framework offers the two sectors — Arabs and Jews — an opportunity to meet, giving rise to a meaningful interaction that is different than the one that occurs in regular lessons. The participants develop a humanistic attitude toward other people, and this is manifested in their ability to relate to each person as individual, unique, and one of a kind,

thus eschewing the stereotypical attitude of a faceless person that represents a particular sector.

Description of the project

About 110 students from both sectors are divided into six groups and spend two hours a week for the entire year participating in the "co-existence" project. The groups are mixed, the aim being to have an equal number of students from each sector. Learning takes place in a workshop framework under the direction of one or two moderators, one Jewish and one Arab.

In order to put into practice what we preach, namely the need of interaction between the Jewish and Arab populations, the College created what is called: "the pairs project" where the students attend courses on co-existence in education. Half of the participants are Jews and half are Arabs. The courses are run by two co-coordinators — Jewish and Arab. Every class is divided into pairs of students — a Jew and an Arab, who,

apart from attending the same class, have to prepare a course project together.

In the course, several topics that are related to the personal and communal identity and the cultural aspects of the two groups are discussed. The goal of the “pairs project” is to change the stereotype attitude of an individual toward the individual or group of the other sector. The main objectives are to create some communication channels between the individuals and groups of the two sectors, and to get to know each other’s mentality, culture and tradition.

Program Plan

The project has two phases. The first phase takes place in the students’ second academic year. At this stage all students are divided into groups, having an equal number of Arab and Jewish students. In the first year of the program (in the second year of study) all students attend an annual compulsory course of two hours per week. The first semester is

devoted mainly to group work and mutual encounter in order to get acquainted and start work on their “pair project”. The second semester is devoted to frontal lectures on various subjects, including lectures given by guest lecturers. In the end of the second semester students present their “pair project” to the class.

In the second year of the project (the students’ third academic year) participation is optional. At this stage, mixed pairs of students (Jewish and Arab) go to regular Jewish and Arab schools where they implement the knowledge and methods acquired in their first year.

During the course of each semester, every group goes on a one-day trip. The first trip is generally a bonding trip. This year, for instance, the students went south for camel rides and jeep trips. The aim of the second trip, during which the groups visit some of the participants’ actual places of residence, is to become more profoundly acquainted with the

other sector’s life styles. This trip constitutes the jewel in the crown of the project’s activities. Over the years, a tradition has developed whereby two students from each group — one from each sector — invite the entire group to their places of residence, often even to their homes. The hosting students assume the responsibility of planning the trip down to the last detail. In this way, they gain, among other things, valuable experience in planning and organizing a trip.

All the groups work toward enhancing the interpersonal and cultural acquaintance with the other sector, and they all deal with the problems posed by current reality.

Art as a common factor

The college offers an art-teaching department as well as a visual arts center for training instructors. It is a common sight nowadays to see Bedouin art students sitting at a computer, creating a website or a presentation, surfing the Internet in order to find material for art lessons. The Bedouin students, like all the

others in the college, have been exposed to a variety of exhibitions for years—and this exposure draws them into the world of art and creation.

Three groups can be observed in the art lessons: Jewish students who were born in Israel, “new immigrants” from the former USSR, and Bedouin born in Israel. Every one of them contributes his worldview for the benefit of the entire group. Tolerance, mutual giving and friendship, too, have become assets of the college. Familiarity and proximity diminish reservations and prejudices. Since we live in a particular region, and the students are Bedouin-Moslem citizens of Israel, Islamic culture and art are included in the curriculum.

Bedouin comprise one-third of the student body in the visual arts center. The studies at the center introduce them to the world of contemporary Western art while

maintaining their relationship with their culture. They are encouraged to express themselves and attain a high standard of artistic skills and qualifications. A survey of the students' works shows that without a doubt, many of them have learned to combine the traditions and artistic trends from their unique culture with insights from the Western artistic culture. In addition, they have acquired the tools to express their inner world, their difficulties, and their personal and collective aspirations.

Every year, an increasing number of youngsters from the Bedouin sector study art at the center and are exposed to the visual arts. The number of parents who are aware of this field and its contribution to their children's education has also increased. These parents are encouraging their children — especially their daughters — to study art, and some of them are demanding that school principals

and head of community centers expose the children to the understanding and creation of art.

The graduates of the department and the center are among the leaders of the development and preservation of Bedouin culture. An example of this is the involvement of some of them in the establishment of the Bedouin Museum in Rahat. The use of artistic means in order to express options, feelings and content, is yielding fruit, and acquaintance with the Moslem and Arab visual culture, both traditional and modern, has permeated the Bedouin population in the south.

Such projects are particularly important for students of education, for as future teachers, they are expected to become agents of change, able to convey a message of co-existence to their pupils. These aims cannot be attained simply by teaching didactic methods or by



talking about the importance of accepting others. The view was taken that a means to build bridges over cultural differences could only be provided by co-operative work and mutual understanding.

Art Exhibition Exchange: Israel-America

On 5 May 2002, two art exhibitions are set to open in two different countries, Israel and the United States.

The two countries, far apart in terms of space and time, yet close in human, cultural, social and artistic respects, have joined together for an important, fruitful and intriguing project.

In the Central Art Gallery of Oregon State University, in the city of Corvallis, Oregon, U.S.A., seven Israeli artists — among them a Bedouin artist — will exhibit their work in oil painting. The subject of the work relates to landscape scenery of the Negev region in Israel. All of the exhibiting artists are engaged in the teaching of different fields of art in the Kaye College of Education in Be'er Sheva, Israel. The curator of the exhibition is Dr. Rachel Kroupp, who, together with Mr. Kent Sumner, Director of Memorial Union Gallery of

Oregon State University, initiated the idea of exhibition exchanges, which makes possible the meeting and experiencing of the culture, atmosphere and style of artists from different peoples.

In parallel, a group of American artists, under the auspices of the Agricultural Department of O.S.U., will exhibit their work in the Art Gallery of Kaye College in Israel. The subject of the exhibition is agriculture in the State of Oregon, and its name is "Art on Ag." The curator of the exhibition is Ms. Shelley Curtis.



Ulpan Akiva, Netanya

Frieda Fisher

A summary of various activities which have taken place at Ulpan Akiva with reference to peace education and co-existence.

- Convention of the Association for Adult Education on “Adult Education in the Era of Peace”. Participants were from the educational field in Israel, delegates from Jordan and the Palestinian Authority.
- Seminar in Hebrew with Druse women from the Galilee and an encounter between them and students of Arabic from Kay College in the Negev. Objective of the meeting: Acquaintance with both cultures.
- Seminar on : “Road Safety” for members from “The Red Crescent” and meeting between them and the Ulpan students.
- 10 “Experience” Days— Junior High Students from Jewish Schools get acquainted with



Arab culture — folklore, music, food and linguistic idioms which are typical of Arab culture.

- Encounters between Jewish and Arab students through the Internet. The objective was to get to know each other through the computer. To summarize activities there was a face-to face meeting between the students.
- Encounter of students from the "Abraham Center" in Gaza — studying Hebrew with Israeli students.
- Encounter of teachers and students from the Hebrew Ulpan in Hebron at Ulpan Akiva with Israeli students and teachers .

- Encounter of Jewish students from High Schools with colleagues from Arab villages such as Baka-al-Garbia, Kalanswa and more. The aim of this meeting was to personally get acquainted with the Arab way of life .

A multi-cultural get-together was held at Ulpan Akiva on January 5-6 2001. This meeting was between Druse educators from Pekein and teachers from Neve Shalom who are studying Arabic at the Ulpan. Also participating in this event were students from the Ulpan — new immigrants and students from abroad.

The subject of the meeting was "Woman's Status" with lectures, enrichment, Hebrew language

study and the relationship between Hebrew and Arabic. Salman Aarmar — Druse Teacher and Coordinator of the Arabic Department at the Ulpan initiated this project which was one of the most important meetings to be held at the Ulpan. The aim is to bring together and strengthen the relationship between the two nations.

The 13th annual conference of teachers of Arabic and Islam in Israel will be held on 21 March 2001. This conference will be held at Ulpan Akiva and will consist of workshops on various subjects connected with education — the language, culture and folklore.

We hope to continue this mutual co-operation with the UNESCO ASPnet.

Ulpan Akiva Update

SUMMER COURSES AND 'KIDS TOO'

We have prepared an exceptional program this summer for those dedicated and supportive participants who will be coming to Ulpan Akiva. The current situation is having its affect on all of us but we are continuing as scheduled. We feel that this is the time to come in solidarity with us and Eretz Israel.

U.A. HOSTS JEWISH EDUCATORS FROM VARIOUS COMMUNITIES ABROAD

In April, a group of Jewish Educators from various communities in the world visited the Ulpan. After a briefing on our activities, they joined different classes and met with new immigrants and foreign students. Their enthusiasm had no bounds and they promised to promote Ulpan Akiva abroad.

"BIRTHRIGHT" YOUTH GROUP FROM UZBEKISTAN AT ULPAN AKIVA

42 youngsters from Tashkent,

Samarkand, Bukhara and Navoi spent 10 days at Ulpan Akiva getting a "taste of Hebrew" and sightseeing in Israel. Uzbekistan's Ambassador Usmanov Ibek was the guest of honor at the welcome ceremony and expressed his concern about "his" children. The highlight of their visit was the mega event at Binyanei Haoooma with 2200 participants from all over the world. The BRI program is made possible through the initiative of Charles Bronfman and Michael Steinhardt, who were present at this gala event.

A very touching encounter took place at the "Shevach Mofet" school who lost 7 of their students from the FSU in the bomb attack at the Dolphinarium in Tel-Aviv.

THE SWEDISH AMBASSADOR AT ULPAN AKIVA

As special guests of the Mayor of Netanya, Mrs. Miriam Fireburg, Ambassador Anders Liden and

his wife Linnea requested to visit this special center which they had heard so much about - Ulpan Akiva. They met with the Management and some new immigrants studying at the Ulpan. A very recent immigrant who is expecting his second child told the Ambassador: "Please tell your Government and the European Community that all we want is to live here in Israel and to bring up our children in peace"

This is what we all want...

"HERZLIA LEARNS ARABIC" — END OF TERM

In the presence of the Minister of Arab Affairs, Mr. Saleh Tarif, the Mayor of Herzlia - Mrs. Yael German and other officials, the closing ceremony took place for the Junior High school students who completed a 3 year spoken Arabic course organized by Ulpan Akiva.

"Friends" A Coexistence English Day, Beit Berl

Yaffa Shoval

Towards Professional Development is one of the programs for in-service Junior High School English teachers organized by the English Department of the Teachers' Center of Beit Berl College. Approximately 45 teachers from 12 Jewish and 10 Arab schools took part in the program during 2000-2001. One of the events which brought the school year to a close was a coexistence English day entitled **"Friends"**. Apart from being a multicultural encounter of Arab and Jewish teachers and their students, it was also a unique, multifaceted meeting of inspectors, teacher-trainers and English coordinators from both sectors. All the participants took an active part in each and every activity. They eventually referred to this day as 'Magic Day'.

The day focused on the theme of friendship and aimed at the following objectives:

1. To put the New English Curriculum from theory into practice through experiential performance based tasks
 2. To get Jewish and Arab students, who had never met before, together in a coexistence event
 3. To plan and take an active part in a day, which would serve as a model English day for Jr. High Schools
 4. To provide a vehicle for practicing and improving communicative skills in English
- The day was carefully planned and organized down to the last detail. Invitations were sent out to schools. Every school chose 2-3 student representatives from grades 7 or 8. The theme of friendship was brainstormed in every class and the students produced posters, short poems, and drawings which were put up on a wall entitled **"From Friends to 'Friends' — sharing with your Classmates."** Other wall decorations and posters that welcomed the participants were:

- **"Clever Friends"** — excerpts from literature, poetry and children's writing on friendship
- **"My Friend — This is What Friendship Means to Me"** — a corner to put up objects and anecdotes by the participating students
- **"Visiting 'Friends'"** — visitors and teachers write their thoughts
- **"Getting Together"** — a collage corner of proverbs and sayings, to be presented by "Friends" during one of the day's activities.

The participants were divided into mixed heterogeneous groups, of both Arab and Jewish teachers and students, about eight to a table. The day started off with **"Tune into Friendship"**, a sing-along. The participants sang from a special songbook of familiar topic-related songs. During the singing you could feel that they were starting to open up and feel more at ease.

“Getting to Know You” was the first activity. Each group member had to explain the meaning of his/her name. Coincidentally, Jewish Amir and Arab Amir were sitting at the same table. It was enlightening to learn that the meaning of “Amir” in Arabic is ‘prince,’ while in Hebrew it is ‘the top of a tree.’ This activity was followed by **“Tell me About”**, a closed-track board game, which gave the members of each group an opportunity to ask each other personal questions and learn more about one another.

“Getting Together” was the second activity. Every group had to choose a proverb from a list of friendship-related proverbs, which would serve as their motto. They had to write it down on a piece of cardboard, decorate it and present it to the forum. “The kids cooperated, consulted each other, and considered each other’s suggestions in the best possible way. It was a pleasure watching them.”

(teacher’s comment) The posters were put up on a wall and together they created a very special “Friends” collage.

“Getting to Know your Culture” was the last activity before the break. Each group randomly chose a ‘culture’ topic, e.g. showing emotions, greetings, saying goodbye, dating, etc. Each group member discussed the choice with a partner from a different cultural background and then presented it to the other members of the group. “I was especially moved when they shared with us what they had learned about each others cultures and social codes. The activity gave the students an opportunity to use the English language to talk about themselves and exchange views and ideas in a real life situation.” (teacher’s comment) During the break everybody was invited to sign up for the “Friends” Internet Forum, through which they could maintain contact in the future.

The second half of the day consisted of three workshops:

- **A puppetry workshop:** The participants were asked to turn Aesop’s Fables and some Greek Myths into dialogues, create puppets (by following instructions) to represent the heroes of the stories and prepare a show. “The students really enjoyed preparing the puppets. They enjoyed making up the dialogue and they liked practicing for the show. I think that it was a great joy for them to act out the fable, especially when they could hear the crowd laughing.” (teacher’s comment)
- **A drama workshop:** The students and teachers were supposed to come up with dramatic sketches on various situations related to friendship. “We were introduced to the world of drama very quickly. Within

ten minutes we all became actors. The students were very excited and came up with many wonderful ideas in terms of what to do and how to act it." (teacher's comment)

- **A poetry and music workshop:** The members of the group were asked to write a poem on the topic of friends, compose suitable music to the lines chosen and come up with the 'song of the day'. This workshop yielded two brand new rhythmical and catchy "Friends" songs: **"Friends are Forever"** and **"A Friend is Like Medicine"**. They accompanied their singing with musical instruments: guitar, saxophone and violin. It was exciting to listen to an Arab girl playing the violin to the tune of "שיר השלום" using the "Friends" words she and her group had composed.
- To conclude the day, all the participants 'tuned into' the

new songs and sang enthusiastically together.

The Coexistence English Day was the highlight of an eventful year of study and enrichment. It was designed and organized by the pedagogical team of the English Department of the Teachers' Center, Hasharon, Beit Berl and by the team of the English Teaching Centre in Beit Berl College. The English teaching teams, who participated in the seminar throughout the year, designed assessment rubrics for the various tasks of the day.

It's very hard to convey the special atmosphere of the day by simply relating to the program and the various activities. Some quotes from teachers' and students' reflections on the day might help us share the magical experience with you.

Teachers' comments:

- "I felt as if this day was creating its own history, with

the crisis situation as it is in Israel today, it was a wonderful feeling to sit together, Jews and Arabs. We were actually experiencing coexistence."

- "The English Day inspired me and gave me the desire to try some of the activities in my classroom next year."
- "...it gave the children the feeling that unity and peace was a real possibility, that by working together one could achieve something worthwhile."
- "The day gave me a direction of how to make a successful English Day."
- "The English Day really gave the students the opportunity to express their talents in many different areas and this is what teachers should strive for in the classroom."

- “When I left the building my eyes were shining with joy and excitement. I know that the kids from our school shared the same feelings.”

Children's comments:

- “We discovered a common language.”
- “I learned today about the differences and similarities between the Arabs and the Jews.”

- “I made new friends and I will try to keep in touch with a girl I acted with in the drama activity.”

- “I enjoyed the day very much.”

- “It was fun. I hope to do it again.”

- “I learned not to be ashamed of my English.”

*The program of the day, the various detailed tasks, the

accompanying assessment rubrics and reflection sheets are accessible through the English Teaching Centre site, Beit Berl College:

http://www.beitberl.ac.il/beitberl/doa_iis.dll/Serve/level/English/1.2.1.5.2.html

Yaffa Shoval is the head of the English Teaching Centre and the English Department of Mercaz Morim Hasharon of Beit Berl College, shovalya@hotmail.com

