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West Coast News

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Banquet Excitement Mounts...with a Special Tribute to Rabbi Kalinsky... Plus Awards to the Usdans, Rabbi Huttler, Councilman Weiss, the Strajchers and the Lieberman Scholars



Helena & Steve Usdan



Rabbi Reuven Huttler



Hon. Jack Weiss



Rabbi Sholom & Elaine Strajcher



Mayor Anthony Villaraigosa to attend Banquet

On Monday evening June 19, 2006, at Sephardic Temple, we will honor **Helena & Steve Usdan** with the *OU Chesed Award*; **Rabbi Reuven Huttler** with the *OU Lifetime Rabbinic Achievement Award*; **The Honorable Jack Weiss, 5th District** with the *OU Community Leadership Award* and **Rabbi Sholom & Elaine Strajcher** with the *OU/NCSY Chinuch Award* and the 2005/2006 **Lieberman Scholars** which include **Elisheva Goldberg** from Seattle, **Ian Kessler, Steve Paletz** and **Liz Rubin** from LA. A special tribute will



Rabbi Alan Kalinsky

The Orthodox Union's Senator Joseph Lieberman Scholars (a joint program of the National Conference of Synagogue Youth and Institute for Public Affairs. Pictured (top l-r) Ms. Rubin & Goldberg. (lower l-r) Mr. Kessler & Paletz.

be given to our own **Rabbi Alan Kalinsky** for 20 years of service to OU West Coast .

Marriage Enrichment Shabbaton: 4th Annual Event is Fantastic



Rabbi Kalinsky (left) with the co-chairs in Purim costumes



Drs. Esther & Robert Levine in their Purim costumes



Past co-chairs, Sam & Robbie Swarz with Sandy & Rabbi Kalinsky

The 35 couples who attended our 4th Annual Marriage Enrichment Retreat at the **Luxe Summit Hotel** over the weekend of March 10th 11th . The newly renovated rooms, the meals and the company were great – but **Dr. David Pelcovitz** was the star. His topics included *Reconcilable Differences; Anger Management; Preserving the Initial Dream and Clashing Bumper Stickers*. Our co-chairs – **Issy & Phyllis Hirsch, Moti & Ayala Naor** and **Esti & Alan Samson** are already looking for a date for next year's event.

Our Way Shabbaton – June 9-10, in Los Angeles

Congregation B'nai David-Judea will be the location of the Our Way - Deaf Community Shabbaton. Shabbat meals will be catered by Brenda and all functions will be at BDJ. All prayers and lectures will be fully interpreted. The featured Scholar-in-Residence will be **Rabbi David Kastor**. He has been working for Our Way since 1987 as a regional representative for the DC metro area. This program is open to all Jewish Deaf and Hard of Hearing – regardless of your Jewish background. For more information please contact Lori Moore, 818-509-7740 or Ruth Morris at morris29@webtv.net. Application deadline is May 30th .



NCSY: Spring Regional May 26-29 – Call 310-299-9000 ext.209 for more information

Yachad L.A. Update...

You may already be familiar with Yachad's successful social, recreational, and education programs which allow people with special needs have the chance to develop vital social skills with their non-disabled peers, becoming confident members of the community. Yet, you may be less familiar with immeasurable impact that Yachad has had on thousands of youth who participate in Yachad's unique summer programs, which provide unique and inclusive sleep away camp and work programs. Participants enjoy a complete camping experience including swimming, boating, arts and crafts, drama, learning, and sports with their non-disabled peers.

On Monday, May 8, **Shuli** and **Avi Steinlauf** hosted a dessert reception in support of Yachad. **Dr. Jeff Lichtman**, National Director of NJCD/Yachad, greeted the attendees followed by words from **Perri Tabak**, West Coast coordinator, and **Tzvi Burston**, a Yachad volunteer. The evening concluded with a heartfelt video of the camps in action. Thank you to the Steinlauf's for opening up their home for such a wonderful cause. Thank you to the many that attended and offered their support.



Synagogue Leadership Seminar

On Sunday, April 30, 2006, the OU held its second annual Synagogue Leadership Seminar. This year's seminar focused on two issues. The first was the issue of security for our shuls and schools, entitled, "Open Shuls in a Closed World: Security vs. Openness in Your Shuls and Schools," a subject that still weighs heavily on all lay leaders and administrators. The OU hosted **Paul Goldenberg** and **Richard Marks** from the New York-based **SCAN**, a Federation-affiliated entity that promotes security awareness and education throughout the Jewish communities of North America, as well as **Alan Chertok**, chief of security for the



Los Angeles Jewish Federation. Introducing and moderating the panel was **Jack Klein**, COO of the Federation.

The second topic of the evening was, "Kosher Tikkun

Olam: How the Orthodox Community Can Get More Involved with the General Community." The panel was comprised of **David Levinson**, a Reform lay leader who runs **Big Sunday**, a day in May that handles over 200 sundry projects to help those less fortunate in the L.A. area, with some ten to twenty thousand volunteers. David detailed how "Mitzvah Days" are organized, and how some Orthodox organizations are actually beneficiaries of Big Sunday's efforts. **Amram Hassan**, executive director of

B'nai David-Judea Congregation, spoke about what his *shul* does by way of feeding the homeless and other poverty stricken members of the community, as well as other *tikkun olam* projects which make the Orthodox community visible to the community at large.

Rabbi Yosef Kanefsky of B'nai David-Judea introduced the session passionately, both discussing the moral imperative for the Orthodox community to get more involved, as well as citing *Talmudic* and *Maimonidean* sources for emulating G-d and getting involved with people outside the Orthodox community.



Rabbi Kanefsky

The session certainly opened many eyes to the whole topic of *Tikkun Olam*, which in the past has been associated by many in the Orthodox community as something purely for the Reform or Conservative to do. As a result of this session, our hope is that more OU *shuls* will get involved in *Tikkun Olam* projects like Big Sunday.

High School Parents – Principals Meeting: Future of Teens Event

On March 30, 2006, the OU organized an important follow-up meeting between parents of high school students and high school students. During the OU's December convention, one of the Sunday sessions was a panel discussion among five yeshiva high school principals. Each principal was given a chance to speak and express his views on the challenges of educating the children of our community. The only thing missing at the session, observed the organizers of the event, was the opportunity for dialogue between the rabbis and the parents. Ultimately, in order to provide the best solutions for our youth, it was agreed that parents and educators need to be on the same "team," conferring regularly and not giving our children mixed messages. On this basis, **Howard Shapiro**, convention chairman, and **Rabbi Daniel Korobkin** of the OU, organized this follow-up session, where parents and principals met, heard each other out, and schmoozed with each other. Representing the yeshivot were **Rabbi Avi Greene** of **Shalhevet**, **Rabbi Dovid Landesman** of **YULA**, and **Rabbi Avrohom Stulberger** of **Valley Torah High Schools**. Parents from all the schools were present.

The two topics on the agenda for the evening were: (1) Are we raising our children to be great Jews first and great academics second, or vice-versa? (2) Dealing with social issues between boys and girls in ways appropriate for an Orthodox community. A variety of views were aired at the meeting, and it was helpful for each principal to clarify his school's position on these and other issues.

We are grateful to **Beth Jacob Congregation** for hosting the event. If there is sufficient interest, we will organize future such events for high school parents. To request more sessions of this kind, please contact Rabbi Korobkin at dkorobkin@ou.org.