

WURZWEILER SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK



Certificate in Jewish Communal Service

Emphasizing Excellence in Jewish Professional Practice

The complex issues facing today's American Jewish community demand highly skilled and passionate professionals who are knowledgeable about emerging Jewish communal needs, changing Jewish organizational structures and cultural shifts in Jewish life. To meet this objective, Yeshiva University's Wurzweiler School of Social Work created the Jewish Communal Service Certificate in 1990 to train social workers for leadership roles and direct care practice in Jewish communal settings. The program is committed to introducing significant educational enhancements that enable students to keep apace with a rapidly changing Jewish community. Unique and exciting learning collaborations, specialized skill-building seminars and networking opportunities connect students with communal organizations and top professionals in the field.



Yeshiva University

Certificate Program Highlights

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FINANCIAL RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

A series of four, three-hour seminars on financial resource development were held, which focused on running successful capital campaigns, writing proposals, building relationships with donors and establishing planned giving programs and endowments. Each seminar featured a senior professional from Yeshiva University's Department of Institutional Advancement, such as its vice president, Daniel T. Forman.

OFF-CAMPUS LEARNING

Students contracted with the Greater Atlanta Jewish Federation to investigate historical, demographic and Jewish engagement trends within the growing Atlanta Jewish community. Students analyzed the federation's planning and governance reports, financial resource development plans and data from its recent population study. Afterward, they met with the Atlanta delegation at the United Jewish Communities' General Assembly (GA) in Nashville and offered their impressions and action recommendations, which they submitted to the Atlanta Federation leadership for review.

Federation Chief Professional Officer Steve Rackitt commented, "The overview papers were excellent...the observations were astute and recommendations excellent. We are implementing many of them already." This unique learning collaboration was facilitated by Ronette Bloom, a 2005 Wurzweiler graduate and member of the Atlanta Federation staff.

While at the GA, students also met informally with Wurzweiler alumni who hold executive positions at other major federations: Judah Isaacs '86, Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit; Marc Terrill '88, THE ASSOCIATED: Jewish Community Federation in Baltimore; and Max Kleinman '76, United Jewish Communities of MetroWest in New Jersey.



Yeshiva University President Richard M. Joel answers Certificate students' questions on leadership.



Certificate Program Director Saul Andron with students at a skill-building seminar.



Wurzweiler alumnus Jacob Solomon '81, executive vice president of the Greater Miami Jewish Federation, meets with students during the UJC General Assembly.



Students participate in an Israel Study Seminar where they gain an in-depth understanding of the problems and challenges facing Israelis in the human services arena and the strategies and programs in place to address them.

WHAT RECENT GRADUATES HAVE TO SAY ABOUT THE PROGRAM

- “If you want, you can go to class and just get the certificate,” says **Steven Mark** '08, who attended classes on weekday evenings and Sunday mornings while working as a sports recreation director at the Bergen County YJCC in New Jersey. “Most students took it to the next step.” Steven accepted the position of director of child and youth services and liaison to the Kehilla Partnership, a collaborative project of synagogues and local communal agencies, coordinated by the YJCC.
- “I always looked forward to the classes and feel that the courses offered have allowed me to stay on even par with my peers who are enrolled in other graduate programs,” says **Rebecca Leibowitz** '08, who was a recipient of a UJA-Federation of New York fellowship. “The network opportunities that were provided will serve me throughout my career.” Rebecca accepted a position as program manager with the Foundation for Jewish Camp in NYC.
- **Rachel Haar** '08 had “no intentions” of getting the certificate when she entered Wurzweiler, but sitting in the “Major Concepts in Jewish History” elective opened her eyes to “opportunities I never thought I’d be interested in.” “Aside from the networking perspective,” Rachel said, “the GA was filled with feelings of opportunity, of taking lessons and inspiration of the past, the importance of the present and linking it all to secure a better future.”
- **Robert Lebowitz** '08 comments that “the GA impressed me with the power of collective action; the Atlanta project gave me the chance to interact with real professionals and showed me that I could make a meaningful contribution. The seminars have showed me how things worked behind the scenes and have given me new career options.”
- **Dori Zofan** '08 was offered a position in the Intergroup Relations Department of the Jewish Community Relations Council of New York (JCRC), where he will be responsible for developing coalitions in Brooklyn, managing a fellowship training course for young leaders in nonprofits, and consulting to Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities (NORCs). “The Jewish communal classes required intellect and thinking and pushed me to look into my Jewish community from a far different and wider lens,” says Zofan.
- **Joseph (Yossi) Horowitz** '08, a casework graduate who interned at Our Place, a Flatbush drop-in center for at-risk teenagers in the community, directed by Nisanel Perlman '07, found his courses to be valuable tools for learning both the underpinnings of Jewish organizations and issues surrounding Jewish identity. Says Horowitz, who is now a full-time therapist at the center, “As a social worker with Jewish teenagers, it helped me tremendously in better understanding the struggles involved in being a Jew and an American.”
- After her first year at Wurzweiler, **Adena Kaplan** '08, a Wexner Fellow and Davidson Scholar, began working at the Bronfman Center for Jewish Life at New York University running the Collegiate Leadership Internship Program (CLIP) and doing community organization work at NYU’s Hillel. She is a recipient of the National Association of Social Workers Award and has accepted the position of senior associate for leadership development at the Bronfman Center at NYU. Kaplan says, “The past two years afforded me the opportunity to learn in a variety of ways.”
- Summer Block program graduate **Rachel Neuman** '08 researched issues on aging during a placement at the Baycrest Geriatric Health Care System in Toronto. “The course work in the Jewish Communal Certificate program as well as the support from my professors enriched my clinical experience and has prepared and encouraged me to pursue a career working within the Jewish community,” she says.
- “As I sat through the fundraising seminar, I felt as though I could not have crafted a more relevant and enriching educational opportunity,” says **Rachie Jacobson** '08, who secured her position as development coordinator at Beren Academy, a prominent day school in Houston, even before graduation. “The chance to learn from incredibly distinguished and seasoned fundraising professionals is a gift that I feel I have been given. The perspectives that I learned from them will help guide my practice and set the bar high for my professional achievement.”

FAQs about the Certificate in Jewish Communal Service

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DOES ANY OTHER SCHOOL OFFER THIS PROGRAM?

Wurzweiler School of Social Work uniquely offers, in a single degree program, a solid social work education with an elective specialty track that prepares social work professionals for leadership within the Jewish community. Students earn an MSW degree specializing in casework, group work or community organization together with a Certificate in Jewish Communal Service.

WHAT ARE THE PROGRAM'S OBJECTIVES?

The purpose of the Certificate is to provide students who aspire to work in the Jewish community with an educational platform to expand their knowledge of the history, values and workings of the organized Jewish community. At the same time, they acquire the skills for direct practice and effective professional leadership within communal organizations, Jewish foundations, self-organized groups and alternative settings.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

The Certificate in Jewish Communal Service is open to all currently enrolled Wurzweiler students and are interested in a professional career in the Jewish community. It is also available to individuals who already hold an MSW from an accredited school of social work.

WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS?

In addition to the required MSW core curriculum, students in the program enroll in three of four specialty elective courses:

- Jewish Response to Communal Needs
- Major Concepts in Jewish Cultural History
- Organizational Structure of the American Jewish Community
- The Changing Jewish Family

All Certificate students spend at least one year of their supervised field work in a Jewish communal agency.

WHAT ARE SOME PROGRAM BENEFITS?

Students enrolled in the Certificate program integrate and expand their knowledge by participating in some of its dynamic interactive learning experiences:

- The United Jewish Communities' General Assembly
- An intensive Israel Study Seminar
- Special skill-building seminars such as financial resource development
- Agency site visits and seminars with Jewish communal leaders
- Meetings with senior professionals in communal agencies about job and career opportunities

WHAT TYPES OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE ARE AVAILABLE?

A number of merit scholarships are awarded, as determined by the Scholarship Committee, based on the quality of academic achievement, work and volunteer experience. There are also needs-based scholarships, awarded according to FAFSA results. Other sources of financial assistance available to MSW students include Federal Guaranteed Student Loans of up to \$20,500 per academic year.

In addition, scholarships and loans are available from external sources in the Jewish community such as: UJA-Federation of New York; FEREP; JCC Association of North America; JESNA; and the Ruth Rales Jewish Family Service of South Palm Beach County, FL.

HOW CAN I LEARN MORE ABOUT THE CERTIFICATE PROGRAM?

For more information, visit the Wurzweiler School of Social Work Web site at www.yu.edu/Wurzweiler/Certificate or contact Saul Andron, PhD, program director, at 212.960.5400, ext. 5434, or sandron@yu.edu



At Bergen County (NJ) YJCC. Back row (from left): Moshe Anthony '08; Howard Benus, executive director; Paula Cantor, past president, YJCC; and Steven Mark '08, YJCC director, child and youth services. Front row (from left): Rachie Jacobson '08; Rachel Neuman '08; Carol Beyer, director of development, YJCC; and Steven Krull '08.