

Charlotte Jewish Film Festival Sets 2011 Dates

Many of you know the cultural gem that the Charlotte Jewish Film Festival has become in the last six years. The Festival has rapidly expanded from a weekend event to a ten-day extravaganza that brings the best in Jewish cinema from around the world right to our own neighborhood theaters. Additionally, the Festival has spawned thought-provoking dialogue with panel discussions and special guest speakers.

Although it is called the Charlotte Jewish Film Festival, it is the mission of the Festival to reach out to the broader Charlotte community. Encouraging interfaith communication, building bonds with our neighbors and educating the community at-large about the Jewish experience is an integral part of the success of the Festival. The 2010 Charlotte Jewish Film Festival achieved this goal repeatedly.

The interfaith film *Arranged* drew a packed audience comprised of Jews and Muslims who were both entertained by this wonderful film and surprised by the similarities between the two cultures. A very stimulating and eye-opening discussion followed as a panel featuring Rabbi Faith Cantor, Rose Hamid, Leah Levine and Rochele Viorst answered many questions about arranged marriage. As members of the audience and panel lingered on after the program, it was obvious that

friendship has no religion.

In an effort to educate local students about the Holocaust and the horrors of intolerance, the Festival sponsored a screening of the poignant film *Inside Hana's Suitcase* at Charlotte Latin School. More than a hundred students and teachers viewed this docudrama about the director of the Tokyo Holocaust Education Center who obtains a young girl's suitcase retrieved from a Nazi death camp. Curiosity turns to emotional investment as the teacher and her students investigate the life and fate of Hana Brady, ultimately finding and meeting her surviving brother, George. This film has affected children worldwide and it was no different here in Charlotte. The regular matinee showing of this film on the last day of the Festival brought out a contingent of Asian-Americans viewers, once again illustrating the pluralism of the Charlotte Jewish Film Festival.

As it has done in the past, the Festival donated a film from the 2010 festival to the Levine-Sklut Judaic Library at Shalom Park. *The First Basket* was an entertaining and informative documentary about the Jewish influences on basketball since the time it was first played with wooden baskets on the tenement steps of New York. It is now available for checkout from the library.

The Charlotte Jewish Film

Festival has become a reality thanks to the hard work of a legion of volunteers. There are so many areas where your help is needed—marketing, fundraising, ticketing and receptions just to name a few. If you are interested in becoming involved with the Festival, either the week-of or all year through, please contact Volunteer Coordinator Ellyn Gross at ellyn-gross@aol.com.

The 7th Annual Charlotte Jewish Film Festival will be March 3-13, 2011, and will once again entertain and amaze with quality Jewish cinema that really is for everyone. This year's films are sure to stir emotions as well as conversation. Mark your calendars for another great Festival.

The Charlotte Jewish Film Festival is brought to you by the Levine JCC and the Charlotte Chapter of Hadassah, and is made possible, in part, with funding by the Arts & Science Council and the North Carolina Arts Council, an agency of the Department of Cultural Resources, and the National Endowment for the Arts, which believes that a great nation deserves great art. ✪



Black and Jewish Teen Freedom Riders in Charlotte to Explore Race Relations

A delegation of 22 Black and Jewish high school students from Operation Understanding DC arrived in Charlotte on Tuesday, July 13, for a one-day visit on their summer journey.

On the road for three weeks, they visited cities and towns that were the battlegrounds of the Civil Rights Movement, explored the diversity of the black and Jewish communities, and proudly continued the legacy of the Freedom Riders.

The students – eleven African-Americans and eleven Jews – met with community activists and 1960 sit-in leaders B.B. DeLaine and J. Charles Jones; toured the Levine Museum of the New South; learned about Charlotte's Jewish community from Temple Beth El Executive Director Sara Schreiber; and explored the Shalom Park campus.

The 22 students from Washington, DC are part of Operation Understanding DC (OUDC), an educational leadership development program whose mission is as simple as it is vital: to bridge racial, religious and cultural divisions that exist among individuals by engaging youth in a constructive dialogue that leads to increased understanding.



Standing: Sam Edelman, 17; Dominique Perkins, 16; seated: Dolapo Demuren, 17; Shira Singelenberg, 17. All are high school students from the DC area who participated in this year's Freedom Riders program.

Rachael Feldman, Executive Director of OUDC, explains "OUDC's participants have been fearlessly at the vanguard of what has now become our national discourse: race, religion and access to opportunity. Our students fulfill the dream of the civil rights pioneers who came before them,

(Continued on next page)

promoting a deeper understanding

CAROLINA CENTER *for* JEWISH STUDIES

Established in 2003, the Carolina Center for Jewish Studies is an interdisciplinary academic program in the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

The Center promotes a deeper understanding of Jewish history, culture and thought through teaching, research and community outreach initiatives.

The success of the Center's first few years has inspired an ambitious plan for the future, including expansion of academic programs and public event initiatives. To see our event schedule for 2010-2011 and to learn more about the Center and how you can get involved, visit ccjs.unc.edu.



Jonathan Hess, Director
Campus Box 3152
Chapel Hill, NC 27599-3152
P: 919-962-1509
E: ccjs@unc.edu
W: ccjs.unc.edu