

## The Children of Auschwitz

January 27 marked the 70th year since the liberation of Auschwitz concentration camp, the largest of its kind established by the Nazis. It is estimated that 1.3 to 1.5 million people were deported to Auschwitz between 1940 and 1945 and that, of these, at least 1.1 to 1.3 million were murdered.

The ones who fared the worst in Auschwitz were the children, who faced horrible odds, and in most cases their lives ended upon arrival at the camp. Those who were deemed able to work were spared from the gas chambers and it was mainly the boys who survived, because they were sent to hard labor camps.

Children also succumbed frequently to disease. The water inside the camp was highly contaminated and the inmates were forbidden to drink from it. But the children were dehydrated and constantly thirsty and drank the water and thus were exposed to the diseases raging in the camp.

And there were those who were selected by the infamous Dr. Mengele and his team of physicians and for most of these children theirs was the worst fate.

It has been determined that a very large percentage of the approximately 1.5 million children murdered in the Holocaust met with their death in Auschwitz.

Now, seventy years after the end to the nightmare of Auschwitz, through the Butterfly Project workshops at the Levine Jewish Community Center, thou-

sands of students come to learn what discrimination, prejudice, bigotry, and hate can do and to "take a stand" in their everyday lives. They also get to honor the memory of those beautiful, innocent children whose only crime was being born Jewish, by painting a butterfly in the name of a specific child who perished in the Holocaust and saying that name out loud.

In addition, the workshop offers the rare opportunity to hear stories from Holocaust survivors and the opportunity to ask them questions about their survival and lives.

At the end of each of the workshops, the students are asked to write their reflections on what they have learned. Following are a few of the many wonderful responses:

"The symbolism of a butterfly makes sense to me. If you contain a butterfly and you never let it fly, it does not get to grace the world with its beauty. If you contain a person and isolate them with discrimination, they may never do the wonderful things they may have the potential for." —11th Grader, Porter Ridge High School

"I realized today how fortunate I am to have my family and my life. Mr. Bienstock's presentation along with the other presentations showed me how real the Holocaust was for these people and what really happened to them. I also realized that I have a voice and I can choose to use it or not. It is my choice." —5th Grader,

Orchard Park Elementary School

"Listening to the survivor made me feel very disheartened and frustrated, but I think a presentation like that is necessary for all to hear in order to prevent another atrocity from happening. I find it amazing that something as phenomenal as the Butterfly Project was able to come out of something as inhumane as the Holocaust." —10th Grader, Myers Park High School

"People are equal and do not need to be killed because of their race, religion, etc. Everyone is special in their own way." —7th Grader, East Union Middle School

"Every morning you have the chance to be a better person than you were yesterday. How often do you take it? Make today a day of change." —10th Grader, Central Cabarrus High School

*Zikaron v'tikvah.* We remember and hope and, most importantly, teach.

And yet today, despite all the lessons from the past, the world continues to be far less than perfect: Israel is under constant attack and still cannot attain lasting peace. There have been recent attacks against Jews all over the world and anti-Semitism is flaring up in all of Europe.

But here, in Charlotte, the school buses are rolling into Shalom Park, and at the Butterfly Project workshops, a new day has begun. ☆

## Jewish Educational Loan Fund

Contact Jewish Family Services for your JELF interest-free educational loan beginning March 1.

Applications for interest-free loans for post-secondary education (college, graduate school and vocational programs) will be available to Jewish students in the Charlotte area for the 2015-2016 school year from JELF (Jewish Educational Loan Fund). Jewish Family Services is processing applications. The loan application will be available March 1 – April 30 on JELF's website at [www.jelf.org](http://www.jelf.org).

JELF loans are need-based and offer "last-dollar" financing, meaning that JELF provides the final dollars that bridge the gap between a student's total financial resources and the cost of attending school. Applicants must be enrolled full-time in a program leading to a degree or certificate at an accredited institution located in the United States, be a U.S. citizen or have lawful immigration status in the U.S., and be able to demonstrate financial need (FAFSA application required). For more information, contact [info@jelf.org](mailto:info@jelf.org) or call 770-396-3080. ☆

## Shalom Park Freedom School 2015 Spring Movie Fundraiser: The Rosenwald Schools

Shalom Park Freedom School's Fourth annual spring movie fundraiser features a documentary about The Rosenwald Schools, based on the incredible story of how Jewish businessman and philanthropist Julius Rosenwald, President and Chairman of Sears from 1908-1932, joined with African-American communities in the South to build schools for them during the early part of the 20th century.

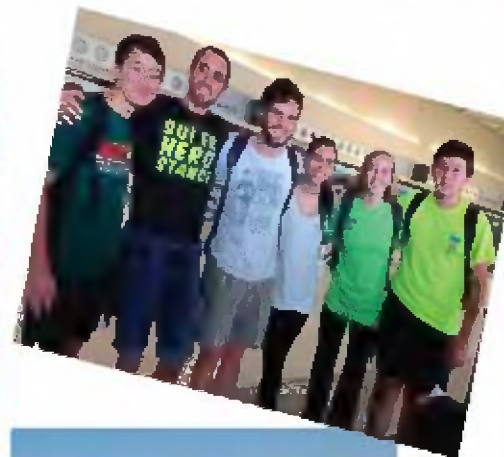
Please support SPFS's 5th summer of providing a literacy-based

summer program for 80 economically disadvantaged scholars by attending the movie fundraiser on Thursday, April 30 at 7 PM at the Sam Lerner Center for Cultural Arts. Tickets are \$10 and will go on sale at the LJCC front desk in April. Light movie refreshments will be served. For more information or to get involved, please contact Event Chair Cheryl Alley at [calley@comporium.net](mailto:calley@comporium.net) or visit our website at [spfreeschool.org](http://spfreeschool.org). ☆

# P2G COMMUNITY TEEN LEADERSHIP EXCHANGE - JUNE/JULY 2015

In collaboration with the Jewish Federation, Temple Beth El, Temple Israel and Consolidated High School of Jewish Studies

**PART I CHARLOTTE:** Welcome Hadera teens and introduce them to the American way of life. Together they will explore Charlotte's Jewish community and all the Queen city has to offer to learn about our cultural differences, *tzedakah* and leadership. (June 25 - July 3)



Want to hear experiences first hand? Just ask Ari Rabinovich, David Rabinovich, Katy Smith, Jessica Soto or Joey Kelso to share their stories with you!



**PART II HADERA:** Journey to Israel with teens from across the Southeast and spend two weeks with students from Hadera. Travel the country, engage in *tikkun olam* projects and learn about Israel's politics, culture and society. Enjoy Israeli hospitality and teen life. (July 13 - 27)

Cost for all 4 weeks is \$2,800\*, which includes a subsidy from the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte.  
\*Rates may vary according to cost of flight

For more information, please contact Tal Stein in the Federation office at 704.944.6751 or [tal.stein@jewishcharlotte.org](mailto:tal.stein@jewishcharlotte.org).