

PANIM 

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The Institute for Jewish Leadership

21 Years of Fresh Thinking, Creativity and the Most Innovative Programming in the Jewish Community

1988-1989

- PANIM, then called The Washington Institute for Jewish Leadership and Values, is founded by Rabbi Sid Schwarz.
- Ten study units, integrating an analysis of contemporary issues with Jewish texts and values, are published. Topics covered are:
 - Civil Liberties
 - Environment
 - Hunger and Homelessness
 - Nuclear Arms
 - Religion and State
 - Economic Justice
 - Human Rights
 - Interfaith Relations
 - Refugees and Sanctuary
 - Social Justice and Equal Opportunity
- *Panim el Panim*: High School in Washington is launched. This program provides a series of four-day leadership seminars throughout the school year for 10-12th graders that integrate the study of contemporary issues and training in political activism with Jewish values.

1989-1990

- The George Washington University, recognizing the educational caliber of the *Panim el Panim* program, begins to provide certificates to all graduates of the program.

1990-1991

- PANIM launches a five-day Advanced Seminar in June for college students who were alumni/ae of *Panim el Panim* and who want to spend a more intensive week studying Judaism and politics with Rabbi Sid Schwarz in Washington.

1992-1993

- The Jewish Education Service of North America (JESNA) completes a commissioned study of *Panim el Panim*, which concludes that the program has a dramatic impact on participants, both in terms of increased social and political activism and strengthened Jewish identity.
- PANIM, along with The George Washington University and the Synagogue Council of America, co-sponsors a national conference on "Judaism and a Just Economy," bringing together leading economists, public policy experts and Jewish scholars.
- PANIM holds its first annual benefit dinner, at which it presents its Jewish Leadership Award. The award honors individuals who have demonstrated a lifetime devoted to civic engagement and Jewish involvement.
- PANIM publishes *Jewish Civics: A Tikkun Olam/World Repair Manual*, the first comprehensive curriculum exploring the historical Jewish communal commitment to social justice and the Jewish values that inform such involvement.

1994-1995

- With the Jewish Civics curriculum as the centerpiece, PANIM launches the Jewish Civics Initiative (JCI) with a seed grant from The Nathan Cummings Foundation in conjunction with JESNA. JCI, which runs for a full year, includes a course, a four-day Washington seminar and a major community service/social change project in the home community.
- PANIM and The Catholic University of America co-sponsor an academic conference on “Scriptural Faith, Ethnicity and Ethnic Conflict,” which is attended by leading policy experts, clergy and educators.
- PANIM introduces a new series of leadership development workshops for professional and lay leaders of the Jewish community.
- PANIM launches “Visions of Peace and Justice,” a program for African-American and Jewish youth celebrating the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. The day of dialogue and service concluded with a program at the Lincoln Memorial which was covered in the *Washington Post* and was featured on ABC’s “Good Morning America.”

1995-1996

- PANIM’s program year began within days of the assassination of Israeli Prime Minister, Yitzhak Rabin. Each group for the rest of the year created unique memorial services conducted at night on the grounds of the Capitol.
- *Panim el Panim* alumna Rachel Bauchman makes national headlines for bringing a lawsuit to prevent the singing of Christian songs at her high school graduation in Salt Lake City, Utah. Rachel is flown in for a seminar session to tell her story and receives a standing ovation from her peers.
- The inaugural issue of *Jewish Family and Life!* magazine rates *Panim el Panim* as one of the ten best Jewish teen programs in the country.
- A PANIM alumni association is launched, as is *Washington Update*, a PANIM publication specifically designed to keep alumni/ae informed and active on social and political issues.
- Steven Spielberg’s Righteous Persons Foundation provides major grant funding to PANIM, and Herb and Ellie Katz of Hollywood, Florida, establish the first year-long Fellowship for college graduates.

1996-1997

- PANIM’s Jewish Civics Initiative wins a prestigious Covenant Grant.
- Jewish Policy Leader’s Study Group is launched in Washington, D.C., to provide monthly Jewish learning and networking for senior officials in government and non-profit sectors.
- The Lilly Endowment provides major grant funding for the launching of the *E Pluribus Unum* (EPU) project, an interfaith exploration of religion, social justice and the common good conceived of by PANIM president, Rabbi Sid Schwarz.
- PANIM is contracted to provide training for Hillel International’s “Tzedek Hillel” program.
- PANIM’s “Encounter with Homelessness” program, during which teens meet with homeless and formerly homeless individuals, receives extensive press coverage.

1997-1998

- *Panim el Panim* seminars exceed 5,000 participants since inception.
- PANIM begins to provide pre- and post-Israel trip programming to communities.
- PANIM publishes *Jews, Judaism and Civic Responsibility*, a curriculum tailoring its Jewish civics materials for students in Orthodox day schools. Using this curriculum, PANIM launches a JCI track designed for that population.
- PANIM produces new study units on Abortion and Child Labor.

- EPU, a three-week summer educational experience, is launched. Sixty entering college freshman attend, with an equal number of Protestants, Catholics and Jews. The program includes tracks on religious social teachings, the arts, service and advocacy, and diversity.

1998-1999

- The Young Jewish Activist Award is created to honor an alumnus/a of a PANIM program who has distinguished him/herself in the realm of social/political action. The award is presented at the annual benefit dinner along with the Jewish Leadership Award.
- JESNA releases a study of JCI noting its “substantial impact on participants’ knowledge, attitudes and behavior related to Jewish values, social justice and public policy.”

1999-2000

- A third phase of JCI is launched with major backing from the Meyerhoff family of Baltimore.
- JCI is extended to pluralistic day schools.
- PANIM president Rabbi Sid Schwarz publishes *Finding a Spiritual Home: How a New Generation of Jews can Transform the American Synagogue* (Jossey-Bass).
- *Lifestyles* (the Jewish People Magazine) profiles Rabbi Sid Schwarz and PANIM.

2000-2001

- PANIM joins with JESNA and the Institute for Informal Jewish Education at Brandeis University in the Cummings Youth Initiative to showcase its program to a national audience of Jewish educators and teen workers.
- A grant from STAR (Synagogue Transformation and Renewal) helps to launch a Synagogue Transformation Project at PANIM that helps synagogues implement the new paradigm outlined in *Finding a Spiritual Home*.
- A national EPU professional consultation is held for leading personalities in the fields of religion, the arts, education and social change to consider the implications of a Ford Foundation study of EPU.
- PANIM produces new study units on Capital Punishment, Getting Involved and the Right to Die.

2001-2002

- PANIM, in collaboration with the Council for a Parliament of the World’s Religions, helps to launch the first interfaith service house in the country, located in Chicago. Four out of the seven residents are alumni of EPU 1997, having just graduated college.
- Birthright Israel provides a grant to enable PANIM to expand its post-Israel trip programming.
- PANIM produces new study units on Gun Control, Peace and War, Poverty in America and World Poverty.
- The Washington Institute for Jewish Leadership and Values changes its name to PANIM: The Institute for Jewish Leadership and Values.

2002-2003

- PANIM’s founder Rabbi Sid Schwarz is presented with the Covenant Award at a luncheon ceremony at UJC’s General Assembly in Philadelphia. The annual award, which recognizes individuals for outstanding contributions to Jewish education, brings prestige and attention to PANIM and to the caliber of its educational programs.
- In June 2003 PANIM introduces Summer JAM (Judaism, Activism, and *Mitzvah* Work), a three-week program in Washington, D.C., for Jewish high school juniors and seniors. Housed at The George

- Washington University, Summer JAM uses elements from PANIM's successful experiment with EPU, incorporating Jewish learning, community service and the development of "intentional community."
- Building on its new name and logo, improvements in PANIM's communications program and printed materials (including a new mission brochure, a capabilities brochure and a redesigned newsletter) help to bring about a dramatic increase in the visibility of the agency in Jewish communities across the country.

2003-2004

- PANIM receives a major planning grant from the Nathan Cummings Foundation which allows staff to evaluate JCI and chart out the organization's future service-learning programs.
- PANIM reenergizes its alumni relations effort with the creation of an alumni e-newsletter, *Kol PANIM*. Issues addressed during the first year include the Patriot Act, the environment, abortion and gay marriage.

2004-2005

- PANIM received funding from the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation to conduct a Jewish Teen Leadership Summit in Washington. Top youth leaders from every major American Jewish youth movement enhanced their skills, networked with their counterparts in other organizations and brainstormed ways to engage the 80% of Jewish teens who remain unconnected to any Jewish identity program.
- Funding was secured from several foundations to underwrite an idea generated at the Teen Summit. PANIM, in conjunction with the Jewish Coalition for Service and the North American Alliance for Jewish Youth, coordinated "J-Serve 2005," one designated day of community service across the country on April 17th. J-Serve 2005, endorsed by every major American Jewish youth organization, linked the Jewish community with the larger national "weekend of service" being coordinated by Youth Service America.

2005-2006

- In response to growing evidence that American Jewish teens are less informed about and feel less connected to Israel than ever before, PANIM teamed up with AIPAC to sponsor an Israel Education and Advocacy Seminar. Attracting 100 students from 19 states (filled to capacity), the three-day program explored Zionist ideology, conveyed the basics about Israel's history, politics and culture, and provided students with intensive training in advocacy.
- In conjunction with its Chai Anniversary Benefit Dinner in May, PANIM held its first ever national alumni reunion. Twenty-five of PANIM's most committed alumni--spanning PANIM's 18 years of operation--convened for a half-day program. The learning together re-kindled the PANIM magic and the alumni that gathered were eager to work on planning a more systematic program to reach out to many more alumni around the country.
- Hoping to expand its efforts to "teach the teachers," PANIM sponsored an interdenominational four-day retreat for rabbinical students on "Re-imagining the American Synagogue" based on Sid Schwarz's book, *Finding a Spiritual Home*. Seven seminaries from across the denominational spectrum sent students to this four day retreat held at Isabella Friedman Retreat Center in Connecticut. The response from the seminaries was so positive that the program will be expanded in 2006-07.

2006-2007

- PANIM president, Rabbi Sid Schwarz, publishes *Judaism and Justice: The Jewish Passion to Repair the World* (Jewish Lights), a volume that combines a history, theology and theory of Jewish social justice. Ruth Messinger, president of the American Jewish World Service, wrote the foreword and called the book, “a spectacular analysis of the lived tension between Jewish tribal and covenantal consciousness.”
- In a collaboration with national Hillel, PANIM publishes a new curriculum entitled *Just: Judaism, Action and Social Change*. The curriculum will not only be used by the network of communities in PANIM’s Jewish Civics Initiative program (30+), but will serve as an educational resource for the growing field of Jewish service-learning.
- PanimWorks is launched. This newest addition to PANIM’s program menu is a two-week community service program for teens in the southwestern United States. Participants live with the Navajo and are mentored by members of that community. Teens work side-by-side with their hosts on projects that benefit the community. Cross-cultural learning between Judaism and Native-American culture is a unique part of the experience.
- Rabbi Sid Schwarz is named by *Newsweek* magazine as one of the 50 most influential rabbis in America.

2007-2008

- PANIM’s Board ratifies a 5-year strategic plan for the organization which includes a new mission statement: To educate, inspire and empower Jewish youth to a lifetime of leadership, activism and service on behalf of the Jewish people and society at large through the integration of Jewish values, learning and social responsibility.
- The organization pilots its first ever state capital program in Sacramento, CA. On the heels of its successful execution, we plan to expand such program opportunities as a way to reach more teens, especially in states that are some distance from Washington, DC.
- Advancing one of the key priorities of the strategic plan, PANIM expands its professional development offerings by sponsoring two National Educator Institutes on Jewish Service-Learning, one in partnership with the University of Maryland in College Park and the other in partnership with the Coalition for the Advancement of Jewish Education (CAJE) at their annual conference at the University of Vermont.

2008-2009

- Rabbi Sid Schwarz announces his intention during the summer to step down from the Presidency of PANIM effective July 1, 2009. The Board launches a national search for Sid's successor. With the stock market crash in late 2008 the Board changes course and decides that PANIM's long term viability is best assured by seeking a strategic alliance with a compatible organization.
- After extensive conversations the PANIM Board approves a merger plan with BBYO. PANIM has the opportunity to retain all of its existing programs as well assume major responsibility over the existing educational programs of BBYO. The merger results in some major cost savings and is held up as a model for the Jewish community which needs to think about ways to reduce duplication and maximize resources.
- In June 2009 a tribute dinner for Rabbi Sid is held which brings together hundreds of supporters and dozens of former PANIM staff and fellows. A Rabbi Sid Schwarz Scholarship Fund is announced to support future participation of teens in PANIM programs.
- PANIM’s staff moves into the BBYO offices in Washington D.C. and continues to run all of its programs under the new name, PANIM: The Institute for Jewish Leadership and Values of BBYO. PANIM’s director of education (and its first post-college Fellow in 1995), Rabbi Jason Kimelman-Block, is appointed to head up the Institute.