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CAROLINA
center
FOR Jewish
studies

News from the Center • Spring 2004

UNC Alumni in New York City Region Come Together to Celebrate the Carolina Center for Jewish Studies



Chancellor James Moeser with
Carolina Center for Jewish Studies
Advisory Board chair, Eli Evans.

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We mean for it to be
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- Chancellor James Moeser

Advisory Board member Steve Nislick ('66) and his wife Linda Marcus graciously hosted a reception on April 28, 2004 in their Manhattan home to introduce UNC alumni from the New York metropolitan region to the Carolina Center for Jewish Studies.

Over fifty alumni attended the reception, where they enjoyed southern and Jewish hors d'oeuvres such as “brisket on a biscuit,” while listening to the remarks of host Steve Nislick, Chancellor James Moeser, Eli Evans, chair of the Carolina Center for Jewish Studies advisory board, and Jonathan Hess, director of the Jewish Studies program at Carolina. The Chancellor welcomed both alumni and UNC-Chapel Hill staff and faculty, and expressed his strong support and enthusiasm for the Center.

“Since 1947,” the Chancellor said, “Carolina has been teaching about religion and had one of the first religion departments in a public university in the country. For the University to fulfill its mission and provide leadership in American higher education, it was necessary to develop the kind of multi-disciplinary program

in Jewish Studies that has now been put in service of students and the people of North Carolina. After 350 years of Jewish presence in America, it was time to act.”

The Chancellor emphasized several early successes achieved by the Jewish Studies program, including new faculty appointments that have made a minor in Jewish Studies possible, the outstanding response to our public outreach programs, including lectures, films, and performing arts; and, most recently, a \$250,000 grant made by the Charles H. Revson Foundation in honor of Eli Evans, to support the Center's outreach mission. This grant will allow faculty to travel throughout the state of North Carolina to lecture on a broad spectrum of topics related to Jewish life and culture and bring outstanding speakers to campus.

“We at the University believe that the Center for Jewish Studies will soon lead the nation in its excellence and breadth of program,” the Chancellor said. “We mean for it to be second to none.” The Chancellor also announced that the Center has raised \$2.2 million, including three new gifts pledged that evening: a \$125,000 pledge to support an annual Jewish Studies seminar for alumni

§ **The Kaplan-Brauer lectureship on the Contribution of Judaism to Civilization** was

established in 2003 by Bert Kaplan, Ellen Brauer Kaplan and Carolyn Brauer Hudson in honor of Alfred and Hilde Brauer, Reuben and Jennie Kaplan, and Albert S. Kaplan. Stuart Eizenstat, '64, a member of the Advisory Board of the Center, inaugurated the lectureship this past February with a lecture on his recent book on Holocaust restitution matters.

§ **The Uhlman Family Seminar Series**,

established by a gift in 2004 from Thomas Uhlman, Ph.D. '75, is an annual day-long seminar for Carolina alumni and friends of the Center. Taught by Center faculty and scholars brought in from elsewhere, the seminar will explore topics as diverse as Biblical archaeology, the politics of modern Israel, Holocaust history, and the study of the American Jewish South.



Jonathan Hess addresses gathered friends and alumni.

and friends, another \$100,000 pledge to support new outreach initiatives, and a \$100,000 pledge honoring Eli Evans.

Chancellor Moeser was introduced by Eli Evans (class of '58), who lives in New York with his wife Judith Evans, an officer at TIAA-CREF; Judith hosted the Board meeting earlier in the day at the corporation's national offices.

"In a post 9/11 world," said Evans in his introduction, "where religious fanaticism has ignited the sparks of hatred all over the globe, there is a psychological shift toward pluralism in America that makes the Carolina Center for Jewish Studies profoundly appropriate. With this step, UNC proposes, as it has so many times before in its history, to become the leader among public universities at a time when the past and future of Jewish history is on the world stage."

"Across the South," Evans added, "there is special interest because of the religious dimension of current events. Non-Jewish as well as Jewish students at UNC want to learn more about the Jewish story as part of their roots. It is a trend that national observers call a 'longing for the spiritual' and the 'search for meaning.' It is inspiring to witness Jewish studies for all faiths coming alive at UNC-Chapel Hill."

At the reception, Jonathan Hess, Director of the Center and Professor of German Studies at Carolina, reported on the surge of student interest in Jewish Studies. Close to 1,000



View from the 32nd floor

students are predicted to enroll next year in twenty-eight courses offered through the Center, and we expect this interest to continue to increase. In fact, many courses are oversubscribed and professors have been forced to turn away interested students, a situation the Board discussed and found to be unacceptable.

Christopher Browning's popular lecture course on the History of the Holocaust is already fully enrolled, and Jodi Magness's introductory course on Early Judaism — a requirement for the Jewish Studies minor — had to close before first and second year students began the registration process. Armin Lange's lecture course on the Hebrew Bible is also full, and elementary Modern Hebrew filled up so quickly, the University had to offer a second section to meet the demand. Hess thanked everyone for their enthusiasm and interest in the Carolina Center for Jewish Studies and invited alumni to visit the University and participate in upcoming outreach programs and seminars.

Thirty-two floors above Central Park on a crystal clear evening, the reception was clearly a Carolina reunion, and it was evident from the excitement in the room that the event marked a historic moment for the University, alumni, and Jewish Studies at UNC. Eli Evans and Jonathan Hess announced that similar receptions for the Carolina Center for Jewish Studies will take place in other cities throughout the United States. Stay posted for upcoming events in your region. ~

Ways to Give

The campaign for the Carolina Center for Jewish Studies lays out a vision that represents a dramatic aspiration. We are proud that our University has launched a \$24 million campaign for the Center that will have far reaching implications for the role of Jewish studies in the liberal arts curriculum and in its proposed

partnership with the state and the region. Our campaign goal centers on four key investments: endowed professorships, scholarships, outreach, and cultural programming on campus and throughout the state. But this is not only about major gifts. Every gift matters whatever the amount, so please send your donation today

either online at <http://ccjs.unc.edu> or by contacting Jonathan Hess, Director of the Carolina Center for Jewish Studies, 437 Dey Hall, Campus Box 3160, UNC-Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, NC, 27599-3160; Phone: (919) 843-9160.



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