Yachad Receives Ruderman Foundation Grant, Plans to Expand

AMY FORMAN
Jewish Journal Staff

BOSTON — With the promise of a significant grant earlier this month, Hanukkah arrived early for Liz Offen, director of New England Yachad, an organization dedicated to enhancing the life opportunities of individuals with disabilities and promoting their inclusion in the Jewish community. A $50,000 grant from the Ruderman Family Foundation, and a partial match from Yachad’s national branch, will provide the necessary funding for the fledgling local chapter to expand its reach wider into the Greater Boston area and beyond, ensuring the chapter’s sustainability.

The Miracle of a New Kidney

NICOLE LEVY
Special to the Journal

BURLINGTON — Dan Leavitt will be celebrating an additional miracle this Hanukkah. On November 8, as Leavitt was preparing to share Shabbat dinner with a friend prior to surgery at Leahy Hospital and Medical Center in Burlington early the next day. “It’s hard to believe. It’s still hard to believe. It happened so quickly,” Leavitt said from his hospital bed.

Get in ‘Le Mood’ for LimmudBoston

MATT ROBINSON
Special to the Journal

CHESTNUT HILL — Boston, with its vibrant communities, schools and shuls, and where there is such a love of learning, provides the ideal setting for an idea-sharing gathering such as LimmudBoston.

On Sunday, December 8, at the fourth annual LimmudBoston conference, the Jewish community will have the opportunity to embrace and explore a wide variety of topics. LimmudBoston 2013 will be held at Congregation Mishkan Tefila in Chestnut Hill, MA. Limmud is Hebrew for “study.” According to LimmudBoston organizer Steffi Aronson Karp, the Limmud concept began in England in 1980, when three Jewish educators placed an ad in local papers saying that anyone who wanted to “do something Jewish” on Christmas Day should show up at a meeting hall.

A Conversation With Brandeis President Fred Lawrence

CAROL MARLIN
Special to the Journal

WALTHAM — Frederick Lawrence sees himself as a “good fit” for the job of Brandeis University’s president. And it seems his confidence has served this institution, deeply rooted in the Jewish community, well. In three years at the helm, Lawrence has taken advantage of improved financial markets to engage people and build coalitions,” as he steers Brandeis to a more secure future.

In a recent interview at his cavernous office on the Waltham campus, furnished with a conference table, wall of books and comfortable furniture, the president’s avuncular nature exuded warmth and sincerity. With lawyerly precision, he articulated his views and recounted how continued on page 2

Jewish Journal Staff Unveils New Website

SUSAN JACOBS
Jewish Journal Staff

SALEM — The Jewish Journal Massachusetts has unveiled a new website, powered by its partner, the Jewish Daily Forward in New York. The state-of-the-art website can be accessed by the URL www.jewishjournal.org or boston.forward.com. Visitors will find the site clear and easy to use. Breaking local, national and international news rotates in the upper left hand corner. The weekly Torah portion, candle lighting and Havdalah times are listed in the lower right hand corner.

The Miracle of a New Kidney

NICOLE LEVY
Special to the Journal

BURLINGTON — Dan Leavitt was preparing to share Shabbat dinner with a friend prior to surgery at Leahy Hospital and Medical Center in Burlington early the next day. “It’s hard to believe. It’s still hard to believe, it happened so quickly,” Leavitt said from his hospital bed.

The phone call he had waited three years to receive—a kidney was available for him. He underwent transplant surgery at Leahy Hospital and Medical Center in Burlington early the next day.

continued on page 23

Yachtsman who needs a new kidney. The Jewish Journal is a nonprofit newspaper supported by generous readers, committed advertisers and Combined Jewish Philanthropies. Email subscription@jewishjournal.org.
Brandeis President from page 1

this past initial gathering of about 80 people, Limmud has exploded into an international movement in 80 cities throughout the world that engages many thousands each year. Participants attend sessions focusing on all aspects of Jewish life — from art and philosophy, to politics and spirituality. At the heart of the first Limmud Atlanta in 2008, Karp knew she had to bring it home to Boston.

"Everyone I spoke with said, "If you start it, I'm in,'" Karp said."

Brandeis President from page 1

A self-described Jewish conference junkie since her high school days in NEFTY, NFTY and SMARTY on Boston's North Shore, Karp (with the help of a dedicated team of volunteers) launched LimmudBoston in 2010. The annual event has been wildly successful, drawing more than 1,000 participants to Mishkan Tefila last year.

The various volunteer groups in LimmudBoston teams have created an exciting lineup of inspirational programming this year.

"There will be plenty of scholars, and lots of fanny, funny other stuff," said Karp, mentioning that a playwright will read his latest piece, and a bird watcher will present a talk on the birds of Israel.

There will be lectures by volunteer presenters on all sorts of subjects. The topic of briet mitzvah will be covered by luminaries such as Rabbi Bradley Solmsen, head of the new URJ B’nei Mitzvah Revolution, and Jeffrey Salkin, author of the award-winning book, "Putting God on the Guest List," Karp explained. "We share ideas, and are eager to learn from all kinds of people."

Earlier this year, for her part in founding LimmudBoston, Karp was honored with the Jal Yisrael Award from the Synagogue Council of Massachusetts.

She notes that there is an entire generation of Jews that has been raised in a culture based on the Limmud conceptions of pluralism, respect and dynamic experiential education. As attendees arrive at LimmudBoston on December 8, they will be greeted by what Karp calls volunteers (volunteer participants). These individuals will help attendees register and then select from the more than 100 sessions available each hour. The schedule is also online at www.LimmudBoston.org.

Since LimmudBoston is held in a kosher building, participants are encouraged to order lunch tickets in advance. Box, Boston’s first kosher food truck, by Yeshu Chai Eats, parked in front of the building. Karp encourages everyone to come to LimmudBoston to “recharge their Jewish batteries,” and experience all that the Jewish world has to offer.

LimmudBoston is an annual opportunity to explore whatever and wherever you want to go next on your Jewish journey," Karp said.

To register, visit www.LimmudBoston.org.

With federal funds shrinking, this small liberal arts college with major university research facilities must seek resources and form partnerships in creative ways. Lawrence travels the world to promote Brandeis and its students abroad. He reports having met personally with some 10,000 of the alumni that this relatively young school has produced.

Karp said."

For the school’s challenging position, President Lawrence had to find his best match, unequivocally, is Brandeis. 