Annual Report 2005-2006

HEBREW UNION COLLEGE - JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION

עיבוד ו叕וג norsk עלון - מכון למדעי היהדות
The Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion is marking a transition in leadership, as we salute the achievements of Burton Lehman, who has served with distinction and devotion as Chair of the Board of Governors of this institution for a decade, and as we welcome the incoming Chair, Barbara Benioff Friedman, who opens a new chapter in our history. The moment is one that is filled with great emotion for me.

It has been a great privilege to work closely with Burt Lehman these past five years, in a relationship blessed by mutual confidence, trust, and friendship. He has been unfailingly supportive and available during the years of my presidency, and a true partner throughout every moment and challenge. Most importantly, he has become a beloved personal friend and my wife Jackie and I cherish the relationship we enjoy with Burt and his family.

In these pages of the Annual Report, you will read about Burt’s many accomplishments and contributions that have enabled HUC-JIR to excel as the intellectual center of Reform Judaism and to demonstrate a steadfast commitment to the people and state of Israel. As he becomes our Chair Emeritus and Chair of the Nominating Committee, we are grateful for his ongoing wisdom and counsel, and wish him continued fulfillment, together with Brenda and their precious family, as he goes on from strength to strength.

It is also a singular joy to welcome Barbara Friedman as the first woman Chair of the Board of Governors in the 132-year-long history of the College-Institute. As he becomes our Chair Emeritus and Chair of the Nominating Committee, we are grateful for his ongoing wisdom and counsel, and wish him continued fulfillment, together with Brenda and their precious family, as he goes on from strength to strength.

We have accomplished significant advances in fulfilling our mission during the 2005-06 academic year:

- We have completed a strategic plan that forges a vision for HUC-JIR’s future, and have moved into the implementation phase, emphasizing standards of excellence and financial sustainability;
- Key development initiatives have emanated from strategic recommendations, including a gift from the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Foundation for phased retirement, from Nicki Tanner, a Governor, and Harold Tanner for a student information system (see page 12), and gifts for model leadership programs from the Mandel Foundation and Bonnie Tisch, a Governor, and Daniel Tisch (see page 8);
- We have welcomed four new members of the administration, all of whom are charged with strategic planning implementation: Gary Bockelman of Cincinnati as Chief Operating Officer; Dr. Aaron Panken of New York as Vice President for Strategic Initiatives; Dr. Stephen Windmueller as Dean of the Los Angeles School; and Cantor Bruce Ruben, Ph.D., as Director of the School of Sacred Music in New York.
- We have renewed our faculty with gifted emerging scholars who will strengthen the teaching and mentorship on all of our campuses, Rabbi David Levine, Ph.D., the Inaugural Sonabend Associate Professor of Talmud and Halakhah, and Beatrice J. W. Lawrence, Instructor of Bible (see page 19);
- We have organized a Rabbinic Council, chaired by Rabbi Jerome Davidson, to serve as counsel to the President and to assist HUC-JIR with its financial challenges;
- We have raised over $12 million to renovate and restore the Klau Library in Cincinnati and con-
Our task: to educate Jewish leaders who will develop innovative ideas and approaches to serving the Jewish community, and who can speak about Jewish values and tradition with the authenticity that is bestowed upon those who are steeped in the intellectual pursuit of Jewish knowledge.

We have admitted 101 students (48 stateside rabbinical, 6 Israeli rabbinical, 6 cantorial, 15 education, 8 communal service, 13 graduate studies, and 5 DeLeT certificate program students) and are proud to have 58 first-year students at our Jerusalem campus where they will be learning side-by-side with our 24 Israeli rabbinical students.

We have ordained 42 new stateside rabbis and 6 new Israeli rabbis (see page 21), invested 12 new cantors, graduated 9 communal service professionals and 11 new Jewish educators, and bestowed 48 Master’s and Doctoral degrees on students in our graduate and professional programs.

We have continued to raise funds for scholarships to attract the best and the brightest and have been delighted by the many congregations who have chosen to honor their rabbis by creating scholarships in their honor.

We have advanced the renaissance of Jewish life in the Former Soviet Union, through the ongoing work of our Israeli and North American rabbinical, cantorial, and education students who lead services, teach Torah, and build Jewish communities in Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, and Latvia, with the support of the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation.

We have launched the Blaustein Center for Pastoral Counseling in Israel through a pastoral counseling think tank that is heightening public awareness, creating partnerships, and beginning to craft a “language” of pastoral care for Israelis; our Israeli rabbinical students have benefited from new course development and field work placements in this area.

We have continued to strengthen our recruitment initiatives through the generous assistance of an endowment gift from John Golden, a Governor, and Suzanne Golden.

We have renewed our commitment to Jewish education – day school education in particular – by creating a Masters in Teaching through the wisdom and generosity of the Avi Chai Foundation.

With the partnership of UJA-Federation of New York, we have progressed in landmark transdenominational projects that are having a transformative impact on Jewish education in the New York area: the Leadership Institute for Congregational School Principals, in cooperation with the Jewish Theological Seminary, and the Experiment in Congregational Education (ECE)–Re-Imagine.

We have mounted extraordinary exhibitions at the HUC-JIR Museum in New York, including the traveling photographic exhibition entitled Tikkun by artist Aliza Olmert, one of whose works, appropriately emblematic of the Reform Movement’s values, appears on the cover of our Annual Report. On the West Coast, “Art Met Text” in an extraordinary blending of midrash and painting created by Victor Raphael (see page 14);

We have organized the fifth “Great Scholar Series,” co-sponsored with Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton and Jupiter, featuring the scholarship of Dr. Carole Balin, Dr. Michael Marmur, Dr. Bruce Ruben, and Dr. Gary Zola;

We have accomplished all of this through remarkable gains in our development effort; this year we raised over $27 million – $20 million in cash and an additional $7 million in pledges – to ensure the vibrancy of our programs and our ongoing commitment to excellence in preparing Jewish leaders for the future.

That is the essence of our task: to educate Jewish leaders who will develop innovative ideas and approaches to serving the Jewish community, and who can speak about Jewish values and tradition with the authenticity that is bestowed upon those who are steeped in the intellectual pursuit of Jewish knowledge.

We are most appreciative of the generosity of our donors, whose gifts continue to sustain our programs and faculty, support our students, and enhance our research resources. Thank you for your participation in this sacred enterprise as we shape the direction and destiny of the Jewish people. Together, may we see the continued strengthening of Jewish life and learning in a world blessed by peace.

David Ellenson, President
January 2007 / Shevat 5767
When asked about his devoted years of leadership as Chair of HUC-JIR’s Board of Governors, Burton Lehman says that the motivation and the rewards have been equally great. “It is this institution’s mission, and its students, faculty, and administration, that have always energized me. Their idealism, intelligence, and warmth have been a constant source of inspiration and encouragement. Beyond ideology and bricks and mortar, the exceptional people attracted to study and teach at the College-Institute and our ultimate product – visionary Jewish leaders – have sustained my dedication for over two decades as a Governor and Overseer, and will continue to engage my commitment for the years to come.”

Lehman first encountered HUC-JIR’s faculty through the Morris Zimmerman Institute, which he co-founded with Sam Perelson, Stuart Matlins, and Alan Applebaum in memory of the father of their rabbi at New York’s Central Synagogue, Rabbi Sheldon Zimmerman. Lehman will never forget studying with Dr. Norman Cohen and Dr. Lawrence Hoffman at the first retreat and being captivated by their scholarship, warmth, and creativity. And so, in 1989 he joined the New York Board of Overseers, and became its Chair in 1995, and joined the Board of Governors in 1991, and became its Chair in 1996. He brought with him a staunch commitment to educational institutions as a Trustee of Central Synagogue and the Town School, and as a member of the Dean’s Council and Board of Visitors of Columbia Law School.

The College-Institute has benefited from countless hours of Lehman’s wise counsel in financial, litigation, and administrative matters, drawing upon his knowledge and distinction in the legal community. A 1962 graduate of Columbia College, he received the J.D. degree, magna cum laude, from Columbia Law School in 1965, where he was a Harlan Fiske Stone Scholar and Writing and Research Editor of the Columbia Law Review, and clerked for the Hon. Harold R. Medina in the U.S. Court of Appeals, Second Circuit. He is a founding partner of the New York law firm Schulte Roth & Zabel, and has been Senior Advisor and General Counsel of Tishman Speyer Properties. He wrote an op ed article for The New York Times advocating a re-emphasis on ethical values and on the responsibility of the legal profession to society. This commitment to values has found powerful expression through his association with the College-Institute.

Over the past decade, Lehman’s goal has been to strengthen Governors’ involvement through inclusivity, consultation, and participation in process through work on committees and task forces. “People come to board meetings because they want to, not because they have to,” he notes. “Communication is the key to collegial, informed working relationships.” Lehman’s gracious leadership has reinforced the bonds of friendship and shared mission among the Governors. He has also actively fostered closer ties among the arms of the Reform Movement, through the work of the Reform Leadership Council, bringing together the lay and professional heads of the College-Institute, the URJ, and the CCAR for regular consultation.

The College-Institute’s achievements under Lehman’s tenure are many, including an endowment campaign that has reached $120 million, in support of HUC-JIR’s core
academic programs, named professorships, student scholarships, the resources of the libraries and archives, and cutting-edge projects and institutes in Jewish education, pastoral counseling, Judaism and health, outreach, Sephardic studies, assessment, and Jewish renaissance in the Former Soviet Union.

“The revitalization and unification of the faculty has been a primary focus for me, since they are integral to this academic enterprise,” he explains. Over a score of gifted emerging scholars across the spectrum of advanced Judaic studies, including many women, have joined the faculty under his watch. He is especially enthusiastic about the biennial faculty retreats, designed to develop and implement the core rabbinical curriculum, and to better integrate faculty interaction, research and teaching to fulfill the goal of one institution, multiple campuses.

Other milestones during Lehman’s tenure include the transformation of the Los Angeles School into a fully ordaining entity and the expansion of the School of Sacred Music to a five-year program.

“HUC-JIR is a much stronger and better institution than it was in 1996, due to the leadership of its Presidents during this period – Rabbi Sheldon Zimmerman, Dr. Norman Cohen’s interim presidency, and Rabbi David Ellenson – and the great efforts of the Deans, program heads, faculty, and staff,” says Lehman. “We, as Governors, can rightly take pride in the achievements of the institution, knowing that our glory only reflects the excellence of those we have chosen to be at the professional helm. Of course, tribute should also properly be paid to Dr. Alfred Gottschalk for his twenty-five years of inspired leadership.”

Lehman’s partnership with Rabbi Ellenson is imbued with a shared devotion to HUC-JIR’s stateside mission and the Jerusalem campus’s role in building a progressive, liberal alternative in Israel. Together, they weathered the crucible of the Intifada, and were steadfast in their commitment to sustain the integrity and continuity of the academic programs in Israel. “That long period of intensive suicide bombings was a terribly anxious time, and Rabbi Ellenson and I were tremendously gratified by the Board’s staying the course and demonstrating the Reform Movement’s unwavering support for the people and State of Israel.”

He has made certain that the Board of Governors meets in Jerusalem periodically and has enthusiastically encouraged many Governors to go to Israel for the beginning of the new academic year during the summer and for ordination in the fall. “My annual trips to Israel have been among the most fulfilling times of my tenure. Witnessing the expansion of the Israel Rabbinical Program, the remarkable quality of our students there, and their bravery, motivation, and accomplishments, in the face of such daunting odds against religious pluralism in Israel, are simply inspirational.”

Lehman is grateful to all of the members of the Board of Governors for their friendship and dedication and especially thanks Vice Chairs Howard Bernstein and Frederic Lane, for their invaluable work and assistance in providing guidance, and Sylvia Posner for her unerring institutional memory and unflagging devotion to HUC-JIR.

He welcomes Barbara Benioff Friedman as his successor, saying “I believe that each institution benefits greatly from having new people as its leaders – people with new ideas and energy. Barbara Friedman has already contributed so much to HUC-JIR by heading up and developing the Strategic Planning Process, recruiting so many Governors as Chair of the Nominating Committee, and participating in the critical decisions we have made. Her tireless efforts, clear resolve, and steady determination to see the Plan implemented in a way that will assure achievement of its promise demonstrate that she will be a spectacular Chair of the Board.”

As Lehman moves onward, he looks forward to the continued joy of his family life with his wife Brenda, their children Melinda and Stephen Lehman, Haley and Douglas Lehman, and their grandchildren Matthew, David, Julia, and Sophie. “But lest any of you have any doubt about my continuing dedication, I want you to know that I intend to participate for many years to come,” he adds. “My love and devotion to the College-Institute and especially to its people are too great for me to withdraw from active involvement.”

Burton Lehman (continued)
Barbara Benioff Friedman: The First Woman to Chair HUC-JIR’s Board of Governors

Barbara Benioff Friedman’s election as the first woman Chair of HUC-JIR’s Board of Governors is a milestone in this institution’s 132-year-long history – one that reflects the significant role that HUC-JIR has played in empowering women in Jewish life.

Friedman’s journey to HUC-JIR first began during her childhood in Allentown, Pennsylvania, where her grandfather was a founder of the Conservative synagogue and her grandmother was Honorary President. “It was a small town, Jews were a minority, and you felt it,” she says, recalling how the anti-Semitic remarks of a minister’s daughter made her aware of both her feelings of “otherness” and connectedness to the small, yet vital, Jewish community in her city. Jewish holidays celebrated with her family, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins provided her with a strong sense of warmth and inclusivity within Jewish tradition and community that was reinforced through her participation in B’nai B’rith Girls and USY.

She attended Cornell University, where she met her future husband, Stephen Friedman, and received a B.A. from the College of Arts and Sciences in 1959. When they married, she taught in the New York City public school system in Harlem, moved to Stuyvesant Town and had children, and joined the East End Temple. “Upon moving uptown, we were told about a wonderful synagogue with a young assistant rabbi who was great with kids and that brought us to Central Synagogue and Rabbi Sheldon Zimmerman,” she notes.

Friedman’s participation in UJA-Federation of New York’s Distribution Committee, which she eventually chaired, exposed her to some unexpected bias against liberal Judaism. “In a discussion about funding and spending on Jewish camping, someone said: ‘I think we should put money into the Orthodox camps because that’s where the future is. My grandchildren won’t be Jewish, but theirs will be.’ Such a statement distressed me greatly. If it were true, then a lot of us, Reform Jews, were betting on the wrong horse.”

This experience prompted Friedman to bring together a group of leaders from Federation and other organizations to discuss Reform Judaism’s principles and meaning for contemporary life. For several years Rabbi Jack Stern and Dr. Lawrence Hoffman from HUC-JIR organized these classes at her home, which led to her involvement in Hoffman’s Spirituality Group, the predecessor to Synagogue 2000 and its mission of revisioning congregational life.

“My admiration for Larry Hoffman and Rabbi Peter Rubinstein’s encouragement directed me toward the College-Institute,” she recalls. Friedman first joined the New York Board of Overseers and served as Co-Chair of its Development Committee, and soon after joined the Board of Governors in 1993. During the past fourteen years, she has provided valuable experience, counsel, and creative vision as Vice Chair of the Board, Chair of the Student Welfare and Nominating Committees, and as a member of the Pension and Benefits and Budget Committees.

She brings to HUC-JIR a strong commitment to education and community building. She was Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees at Cornell University, where she is now a Trustee Emerita and Vice Chair of the Board of Overseers of its Weill Medical College, as well as former Chair of the Jewish Braille Institute (JBI International), and CLAL. She has served on the Boards of the Settlement Housing Fund, Jewish Outreach Institute, and Central Synagogue, and was a leader of UJA-Federation of New York, where she chaired the Distribution and Public Policy Committees, and served on the Domestic Cabinet, UJA-Federation Board, and Strategic Planning Committee, and has been involved with the Women’s Campaign for over twenty-five years. Her civic and communal values are shared by her husband. Stephen Friedman is the former Chair and Senior Partner of Goldman Sachs, where he continues to serve on the Board of the GS Group, served as Chief Economic Advisor to President George W. Bush, and is now Chair of Stonepoint Capital, a private equity group.
In 2003 the Friedmans endowed the Barbara and Stephen Friedman Chair in Liturgy, Worship, and Ritual at HUC-JIR and honored their teacher and friend, Dr. Lawrence Hoffman, as its inaugural recipient. “This was the first chair to be announced during Rabbi Ellenson’s presidency, and it heralded HUC-JIR’s renewed commitment to academic excellence through scholarship, teaching, and learning. It was a symbolic moment for us, and I was glad that my husband and I could make this investment to further HUC-JIR’s mission of inspiring Jewish faith, thought, and practice through innovative approaches that are meaningful for Jews today.”

From the inception of her involvement, she has been committed to strategic planning for the institution. As Co-Chair of the Strategic Planning Committee and of its Implementation Committee, she has overseen three years of sustained work that has provided a roadmap for HUC-JIR’s future.

“The Strategic Plan addresses the urgent needs for leadership for the changing Jewish world,” states Friedman. “It affirms the powerful influence that HUC-JIR can play in the life of the Jewish people through its vision, values, mission, and mandate. The plan creates a framework for decision-making that is anchored in our mission and reflects both excellence and sustainability. It strengthens HUC-JIR’s capacity to forge a new definition of the seminary as a catalyst for transforming Jewish community life.”

Friedman points to the guiding principles that are critical to the strategic planning implementation process: inculcating habits of excellence in all that we do, achieved through strengthened recruitment, assessment of students, leadership training, and faculty development; enhancing the integration of all sites into one institution, facilitated by cross-campus teaching and the use of technology; supporting core programs while ensuring the self-sufficiency of non-core programs; and promoting HUC-JIR’s long-term sustainability, in order to build and grow a stronger foundation.

“It is the Board of Governors’ responsibility to ensure that this institution has the optimal structure, financial resources, academic personnel, and research facilities to achieve our core mission,” she asserts. “I have great confidence in Rabbi Ellenson’s leadership and, with the implementation of the strategic plan, my hope is to enable Rabbi Ellenson and the College-Institute to flourish – to attract the best faculty, recruit the most capable students, produce significant scholarship, and contribute new ideas to the great issues in Jewish life.”

“Liberal Judaism offers so much to us today,” she adds. “It sustains the continuity of a philosophy, values, and teachings that have instilled a love of knowledge and an impetus to improve and heal the world.” Friedman stresses the infusion of leadership development into the curriculum and its capacity to educate those who understand transformation, and can help to bring it about. “We need leaders who are open to new ideas, who can invigorate our existing synagogues and institutions of Jewish life and at the same time reach out to attract those who are unaffiliated, engage the next generations, and inspire them to identify and participate with the Jewish community,” she explains. “We must attract the best and the brightest students to our programs and train them to be exceptional leaders with the knowledge, skills, and integrity to elevate Reform Judaism in the eyes of those who are resistant to it.”

She salutes Burton Lehman for his distinguished leadership during the longest tenure in modern history as Chair of the Board of Governors, saying “I am grateful to Burt for his ongoing guidance, wisdom, and devotion to the people and ideals of HUC-JIR.” Friedman looks forward to partnership with the entire Board of Governors.

As she embarks on this new journey, Friedman is strengthened by her devoted family – her husband Stephen, their children Suzy and David Cohen, Caroline and David Levy, and Amanda and David Benioff Friedman, and their grandchildren, Téa and Evelina Levy and Sam and Zeke Cohen as well as a new grandchild expected in March.

“HUC-JIR plays a major role in the future of the Jewish people,” Friedman concludes. “It is an honor for all of us to help Rabbi Ellenson advance a Judaism that speaks, in a progressive voice, of tradition, ethical values, tolerance, and interdenominational and inter-religious understanding.”
The College-Institute has been the shaper of Jewish leaders since Isaac Mayer Wise opened its doors in Cincinnati in 1875. But over time, the definition of leadership has changed. Today, we are sending our graduates out to minister to a Jewish people that have diverse interests, apathy for structured worship, and, more often than not, find only peripheral room for Judaism in the wide scope of daily life. It is for this world that we prepare our students, who must, in response, be not merely rabbis but catalysts. They need to have the confidence and charisma to transmit a Judaism that sparks with vitality and creativity, and inspires a new generation of Jews to continue to identify with their faith.

Committed to training these strong Jewish leaders, HUC-JIR’s curriculum has evolved to meet this need. Over the past several years, we have incorporated more systematic leadership training into our courses, and are now poised to launch two new leadership programs on our campuses thanks to generous grants from Bonnie and Daniel Tisch and The Mandel Foundation.

The Tisch Fellowship will support three years of leadership training for five outstanding rabbinical students each year. They will benefit from fully-funded tuition and living expenses and, in addition to their work in the core HUC-JIR curriculum, they will be nurtured through an enriched series of learning opportunities. These will include specialized spiritual, intellectual, and professional development in such areas as pastoral counseling, social responsibility, outreach, and conversion. A series of retreats and an internship at a local Jewish organization with ongoing mentorship will provide sustained training in organizational dynamics, creating community through planning and vision, becoming an agent of change, and human resources and staff management. The Fellows will have structured opportunities to pursue their academic and intellectual interests through individualized coursework and independent study with professors in specialized fields.

This program will further energize the general curriculum’s leadership training and practices that will become staple fare for all students at HUC-JIR. The allure of a fully-funded program within our rabbinical track and enriched leadership training in all of our programs will attract exceptional applicants to the College-Institute, raising the bar for achievement across the board.

With a similar goal, The Mandel Fellowship will give eight outstanding rabbinical students annually the opportunity to enrich their studies at HUC-JIR with a special focus on leadership and the role of Jewish education in energizing congregational life.

The programs’ focus on congregations is supported by the 2001 American Jewish Identity Survey’s findings (re-issued in 2003) that the synagogue remains the central institution of American Jewish life, although synagogue structure itself is changing at a remarkable rate. As notions of congregational life evolve, the rabbi has emerged as the pivotal agent of synagogue transformation.
In 1993 HUC-JIR’s Rhea Hirsch School of Education launched (with the financial support of the Mandel Foundation) the Experiment in Congregational Education (ECE), widely recognized as the most powerful and effective program for re-imagining Jewish learning and living in congregational life. The Mandel Fellowship will complement the ECE’s work by preparing rabbinical students selected as Mandel Fellows to provide leadership for re-envisioning the synagogue as a compelling community that engages the minds and hearts of congregants of all ages. Mandel Fellows will be enrolled in the Master of Arts in Jewish Education program at the Rhea Hirsch School of Education or the Master of Arts in Religious Education program at the New York School of Education. These rabbinical students will therefore add an additional year of study to the normative five-year program leading to ordination. They will also have an opportunity to participate in two special seminars with faculty at the Mandel Center at Brandeis University and at the Mandel Leadership Institute in Jerusalem.

These programs’ goals echo Joan V. Gallos’s definition of leadership in her book *An Instructor’s Guide to Effective Teaching*:

Effective symbolic leaders are prophets, artists and poets whose primary task is to interpret experience and create a meaningful workplace. They are often transformational leaders – visionaries who bring out the best in followers and move them toward higher and more universal needs and purposes. Effective symbolic leaders follow a consistent set of cultural rules and practices: they (1) lead by example; (2) use symbols to capture attention; (3) frame experience; (4) communicate a vision; (5) tell stories; and (6) respect and use history.

The Mandel and Tisch Fellowships will give our students the tools to help them become visionary leaders who will give congregational life a vibrant, sustainable future.
Technology is rapidly changing the nature of higher education. The walls of the classroom are becoming permeable to global exchange as students tune in to courses from remote locations outside the lecture hall. Paper record keeping has become a thing of the past, increasingly replaced by electronic, web-based information systems. With a generous gift from Nicki and Harold Tanner, HUC-JIR is poised to ride the e-wave of the future, making a home for technological advances that will dramatically alter the way we teach, learn, recruit, and administer to our students.

Until now, HUC-JIR has had no central or shared Student Information System (SIS). Each student who has applied to and attended one of our programs has entered our records as a trail of personal data, tracked and archived manually from the admissions office, to the registrars on each campus, to billing, and ultimately to the alumni database where it is stored after graduation. Each stage of this data cycle – and each campus – has had its own methods of recording and storing information, necessitating that all data be transferred manually from one place to the next. The lack of a comprehensive SIS has resulted in silos of data spread out over our four campuses, redundancy of records, potential for error, and duplicated labor.

With the Tanners’ support, we will institute a unified network that links all of our campuses, to make HUC-JIR a more efficient and effective institution for teaching the future leaders of the Reform Movement. The new SIS will make a huge impact on how we recruit and retain students. Admissions staff will be able to quickly and easily track potential students and identify top candidates; applications and financial aid requests will be submitted and reviewed online; and all information thereafter will be collected, organized, and stored cumulatively. Once a student is admitted, faculty will be able to follow and record his or her progress through course work and enter comments and grades electronically.

The SIS will be critical to achieving the goals of the Strategic Plan by increasing efficiency and reducing duplication. The system will include integrated programs or modules for recruiting, admissions, student records, registration, financial aid, loan management, student billing, and degree audit. In addition, it will offer modules for career services (job matching for students, alumni, and work study), learning management software (e.g. Blackboard, WebCT, Moodle), executive information reporting, and a WEB portal for faculty and students.

1. Cincinnati rabbinical students Melissa Simon, Anna Levin, and Lisa Delson in the Jewish Foundation of Cincinnati International Learning Center at The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives.

2. Nicki and Harold Tanner.
The ways in which we conduct recruitment will dramatically change under the new SIS as well. We know that over 90% of rabbinical program applicants first considered HUC-JIR based on the influence of a rabbi with whom they were acquainted, and that approximately half participated in at least one of the nine or ten Youth Programs learning weekends conducted annually on the Cincinnati campus. These connections are our best recruitment strategy yet, until now, there has been no way to track the hundreds of young people each year who participate in them. By next year, we will have a mechanism in place to create a recruitment record for each individual with whom our faculty, students, and administration come into meaningful contact, whether through URJ camps, Hillel, Kesher, or learning programs on our campuses. We will be able to follow up with these high school and college students periodically, cultivating their interest in a career in the Reform Movement. The SIS will enable the following recruitment strategies to take place seamlessly:

- Develop a structured program to utilize HUC-JIR alumni in student recruitment;
- Lower the age at which Reform Jewish youth are first contacted by the College-Institute, and Jewish youth who demonstrate extraordinary leadership potential;
- Strengthen tracking of students from first contact to enrollment via enhanced mentoring, information technology, and established protocols for maintaining long-term contact;
- Better leverage our market penetration into affiliated groups such as alumni, Hillels, Kesher college groups, NFTY, URJ summer camps, and synagogues, and document market needs to increase enrollment strategically; and
- Provide rabbis, cantors, educators, and lay leaders (who often ask how they can assist HUC-JIR’s recruitment efforts among their own congregants) with a menu of opportunities and tools with which to encourage congregants to consider careers in the Jewish professions.
One year ago, eleven rabbinical students enrolled in a quadmester class on *Homiletic Midrashim* taught by Dr. Lewis M. Barth, Professor of Midrash and Related Literature at HUC-JIR/Los Angeles. The class studied the 16th chapter of the *Pesikta de Rav Kahana*, a fifth-century collection of rabbinic homilies (sermons). *Piiska 16* is a homily on the haf-tarah for Shabbat Nachamu, “Nachamu, Nachamu, Ami (Comfort, Comfort, My People, Isaiah 40:1).”

Just as the class was commencing, Nancy Berman, Director Emeritus of the HUC-JIR Skirball Museum, began to discuss the possibility of piloting an Artist’s Beit Midrash Program with Dr. Barth. She felt strongly that “the time was right to invent something new, to go beyond recreating a public museum space for Jewish art exhibitions, and to do something that would engage the HUC-JIR learning community with art and artists.”

“Each day, Jewish texts are taught, learned, argued, digested in HUC-JIR’s classrooms,” said Berman. “Why shouldn’t the ideas and images found in the texts directly inform the art that could be created in those very rooms – art that would speak to the many cohorts of students and educators who would use the space?” She suggested that “by collaborating with a professional artist, the students and faculty would begin to feel comfortable employing art as another avenue of accessing and interpreting the content of the literature they were studying.”

Two weeks into the course, Dr. Barth informed his students that this was not to be an ordinary Midrash class. “Through the generosity of Nancy Berman and Alan Bloch, the Midrash class is going to be transformed into an opportunity to expand our understanding of this ancient sermon on consolation through the visual images created by an artist,” explained Dr. Barth.

Guest lecturers who do not typically teach rabbinical students were invited to the class. Dr. Ruth Weisberg, Dean of the Roski School of Fine Arts at the University of Southern California, provided students with an overview of contemporary Jewish art and practical information on the responsibilities of working with an artist. Victor Raphael, the artist-in-residence, studied alongside the students. He shared his own background as a Sephardic American Jew and presented examples of his art works.
A class project required the students to prepare broad interpretations of the fifth-century sermon for the artist and to work with him in his conceptualization of art works. “The entire experience – for the students, the artist, Dr. Weisberg, Nancy Berman, and me, turned out to be extraordinarily illuminating and led to the amazing physical and spiritual reconceptualization of one of our classrooms,” noted Barth. “The opportunity to study ancient Midrash with an artist opened up new understandings and appreciation for our text and tradition.”

Fourth-year rabbinical student Ruth Adar, who sees herself as “one of the lucky students to have been in the class,” described how their study of the ancient homily transcended a typical lesson plan and became a learning and teaching process leading to tangible results. “Our interpretations of the text would be transmitted to the artist, and filtered into his artistic imagination. Generations of students would be living with the fruits of the intellectual deliberations of eleven students.”

The group’s goal was to transform one of the classrooms into a space for sacred study that reflected the meaning of the sermon they had studied and would provide an environment of comfort and inspiration to all who entered. After hearing students’ concerns about studying in rooms without windows, Victor Raphael aspired “to give students a window into which they could gaze, a space that would inspire them and allow their thoughts to percolate and gel.”

Students visited Raphael’s studio to experience his working process first-hand. “Sparks flew back and forth as we engaged in a process of investigation, interaction, and reflection,” Raphael recalled. “The students’ enthusiasm and commitment to the project was a true inspiration that challenged me to create what I hope will be an enduring legacy for our efforts and a model for future projects of this kind.”

“Seeing art as a form of Midrash enabled us to study our tradition in a new way, and also provided us with a tool for teaching others,” stated Beth Nichols, a fifth-year rabbinical/Rhea Hirsch School of Education student. “The experience of working with an artist challenged me to translate textual knowledge into visual knowledge.”

The outcome of this unique program was “Nachamu, Nachamu: The Heavens Spread Out Like A Prayer Shawl,” a permanent, site-specific installation in Classroom 105. Victor Raphael’s artistic vision of “a sanctuary for learning that is both comforting to the soul and stimulating to the imagination” becomes more of a reality every day.

“I can see the difference in energy level and attention” explains Ruth Adar. “It is a space that speaks of care, work, and study, where the space itself is a work of art and what goes on inside of that space is an essential part of the art installation. The room is most complete when people are learning within it. Victor Raphael’s transformation of an ordinary windowless classroom into a mind-expanding space will enhance study, meditation, and learning for many years to come. But new art and a special place is not the only transformation that has been wrought. Everyone who participated in this project now has a far greater understanding of how art can be nurtured through Jewish study and then brought into this world.”

1. Dr. Ruth Weisberg, Dean, Roski School of Fine Arts, University of Southern California, with HUC-JIR/Los Angeles rabbinical and education student Beth Nichols in Classroom 105.

2. HUC-JIR/Los Angeles rabbinical, education and communal service students in the recently transformed Classroom 105, amid the installation by artist Victor Raphael, entitled “Nachamu, Nachamu: The Heavens Spread Out Like a Prayer Shawl.”

3. (From left) Dr. Lewis M. Barth, Professor of Midrash and Related Literature; Ruth Adar, rabbinical student; Victor Raphael, artist; Nancy Berman, Director Emeritus of the Skirball Museum; and Alan Bloch.

4. Jean Abarbanel, Co-Chair of the HUC-JIR/Los Angeles Enhancement Committee, speaking at the dedication of Classroom 105.
A Library for the 21st Century

In his report to the Board of Governors in 1876, HUC President Isaac Mayer Wise listed the entire contents of the Hebrew Union College Library: 103 volumes of usable books! Today, HUC-JIR’s Klau Library in Cincinnati houses the largest and most comprehensive collection of books, periodicals, and manuscripts of all the Jewish libraries in the Western Hemisphere and is second in size only to the National Jewish and University Library in Jerusalem. It is the foundation that supports HUC-JIR’s academic programs and faculty scholarship.

Yet the Klau Library building – a state-of-the-art facility when it was built in 1960 – is now badly in need of renovation and expansion. Accordingly, shortly after Rabbi Ellenson became President, he focused on the design of a facility that would house the Klau Library’s existing collection and accommodate projected growth of the collection over the next twenty to twenty-five years. The design had to further teaching, learning, and research by creating a renovated building that is worthy of the Klau Library’s mission. With a lead gift of $6.5 million from the Jewish Foundation of Cincinnati, the Klau Library is set for a renovation and expansion that will enable it to serve the growing and changing needs of the 21st century.

The architectural team entrusted with this task – 2enCompass of Cincinnati, and library experts Shipley, Bullfinch, Richardson, and Abbott of Boston – has presented a concept plan, which describes a facility that is both effective and efficient:

- The Klau Library building houses approximately 230,000 volumes accessible to faculty and students, and provides space for faculty and Library offices, reference materials, computer services, study areas, and Cincinnati campus administrative offices. The building will undergo extensive renovation, with the installation of new and efficient HVAC systems, new lighting in the stacks, seminar rooms, carrels, and study areas, and more room for computer and other technical services.

- The Administration building, built in 1930, holds 200,000 volumes, most of them in an area called the “East Wing.” The “East Wing” and the enclosed corridor that connects it to the Klau Library building will be replaced with a three-story “Library Pavilion” abutting the Klau Library building and providing access to it on four levels. The “Library Pavilion” will become the main entrance to the Klau Library, provide direct but controlled access to the Administration building, and house administrative, faculty, and some Library offices.

- Standard open shelving and compact shelving, which accommodates approximately four times as many books as standard library shelving, will be added to sections of the Klau Library building and the “Library Pavilion.” These areas of standard and compact shelving will provide sufficient space to house the entire existing collection, accommodate projected growth of the collection over the next two decades or more, and be protected by temperature and humidity controls and fire suppression systems consistent with industry standards.

- The College-Institute’s collection of rare books and manuscripts, currently preserved in the Dalsheimer Rare Book Building built in 1960, will be incorporated into a high-security “closed” section of the new compact shelving area of the Klau Library Building, and the Dalsheimer Building will be razed. Treasures from the rare book collection will be displayed in a high-security exhibition area in the renovated Klau Library building or the new “Library Pavilion.”

- Other site improvements and new landscaping will ensure handicapped access to the Library, improve pedestrian traffic flow, provide new outdoor study and meeting areas for faculty, students, and other Library users, and an onsite internet cafe.

The Klau Library was created by the generations that preceded ours, and is a treasure entrusted to our care. But, in truth, it is a treasure that belongs to the entire Jewish people. We have the distinct privilege to be its stewards and the clear responsibility to ensure its continued excellence.
The College-Institute’s faculty is dedicated to supporting, nurturing, and training the educational and spiritual growth of its student body, the next generation of Reform Jewish leaders. The faculty is comprised of experts in Bible, ancient Near Eastern languages, Hellenistic studies, Rabbinics, Jewish religious thought, philosophy, Jewish law, modern Jewish history, Judaic studies, musicology, education, communal service and pastoral counseling. This year HUC-JIR welcomes two new scholars as full-time ranked faculty: Rabbi David Levine, Ph.D., and Dr. Beatrice J.W. Lawrence, who have joined our community of esteemed mentors and distinguished educators.

As the Inaugural David and Roslyn Sonabend Associate Professor of Talmud and Halakhah, Dr. David Levine brings his expertise in the study of Jewish Law and research to the Year-In-Israel and Israel Rabbinical programs at HUC-JIR in Jerusalem. The Sonabend Professorship for an Emerging Scholar was established by Sheila Lambert, a member of the Board of Governors, and her husband, Bill Lambert, in honor of Sheila’s, and her sister, Erica Frederick’s, parents, David and Roslyn Sonabend, as an expression of four generations of their family’s love and commitment to Israel.

Levine has been with the College-Institute since 2000, teaching contemporary Jewish Studies. He recalls that he was “attracted to HUC-JIR as an institution of Jewish learning, that the people who make their way to the Jerusalem school – faculty, students, administrators, co-workers – are sincere, devoted, highly-intelligent, and deeply invested in Torah u’Mitzvot – intensive learning and seeking its application, personally and communally.” He stresses that the “inclusiveness of the Jewish experience and the multi-faceted nature of religious expression on campus are unique and stimulating.”

Levine has lectured in Jewish History and Talmud at the Schechter Institute for Jewish Studies in Jerusalem, as Visiting Assistant Professor of Talmud and Rabbinics at the Jewish Theological Seminary, and Instructor of Talmud at the Rothberg School for Overseas Students and in the Talmud Department at The Hebrew University. He has published numerous scholarly articles on responsa, Talmudic tradition, and literature, and written on rituals, miracles, magic, rabbis and holy men in Talmudic antiquity. He has worked on curriculum development in Rabbinic Literature for the TALI Education Fund, educational programming at Bet Morasha in Jerusalem, and continues his work with students at The Hebrew University School for Overseas Students. Currently, he is working with Shlomo Fox on a book entitled Values at War - The Land of Israel as a Moral Challenge.

A scholar in Hebrew Bible and Jewish Hermeneutics, Beatrice J.W. Lawrence joins HUC-JIR in Los Angeles as the newly appointed Instructor of Bible. When discussing the opportunity to teach at HUC-JIR, Lawrence emphasizes how it is regarded as an institution in which “synthesis of the intellectual and the spiritual is highly valued.” She recalls that she was “drawn to this field of study not only because it inspired me intellectually, but because I also found it to be spiritually fulfilling, and I appreciate learning and teaching in an environment in which one is not expected to live a bifurcated life.”

Lawrence praises her students’ motivation and values the intensity and commitment that they apply to their studies. Her Bible courses focus on learning how to cultivate the skills needed for genuinely “hearing” the Torah. She puts special emphasis on developing the critical tools of analysis, and examining the text and context of the Torah. She engages students to approach this understanding through historical criticism, modern literary analysis, and traditional Jewish perspectives. In her Bible 507 course, where students study the Book of Job, she examines the place of Job in modern Jewish thought, especially in post-Holocaust theology.

A distinguished scholar of Bible, Lawrence has taught at Emory University, the Candler School of Theology, and the Melton Adult Mini-School, and has also served as lay cantor for Congregation Bet Haverim in Atlanta, Georgia. Her published articles on Ketuvim, Megilloth, Purification, Qiddushin, and Sotah will soon appear in the publication The New Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible. Lawrence is completing her Ph.D. dissertation at Emory University, which explores “Jethro and Jewish Identity: Identity-Negotiation in Jewish Biblical Interpretation.”
Six new Israeli rabbis, brimming with passion for the Progressive Movement, pluralism, and the Jewish people, were ordained at the Ordination and Academic Convocation ceremony at Mercaz Shimshon on the HUC-JIR campus in Jerusalem on November 10, 2006. They are the pioneers of liberal Judaism in a society thirsting for alternatives to the extreme poles of Orthodoxy and secularism, seeking to reconnect with their Jewish heritage in new and innovative ways.

They will be joining the 39 rabbinical alumni now serving Progressive Judaism in Israel today, transforming the Jewish future of the Jewish state in which they live.

Liberal Judaism was a revelation for Avraham Yitzhak (Stanislaw) Wojciechowicz (known as Stas), who was born in Communist Uzbekistan in 1977. Stas's first encounter with Jewish life was after the fall of the Soviet Union, when he attended a Chabad-sponsored summer camp. It wasn't until he immigrated to Israel after high school and encountered the Progressive Movement congregation Or Chadash in Haifa that he found a spiritual framework that would comply with the modern Jewish lifestyle that he found and loved in Israel. As a rabbinical student, Stas has worked to promote liberal Judaism in the Former Soviet Union (FSU) and among immigrants from the FSU living in Israel. He has established himself as a rabbinical emissary at summer camps and congregations throughout the Ukraine, creating opportunities for learning in communities that are newly discovering their Jewish heritage.

Ezra Nadav Ende, the son of American and Iraqi olim, strives to promote the development of what he calls Caring Congregations – supportive, mutually sustaining Reform Israeli communities. He came to the Israeli rabbinical program with a background in the Masorti Movement and degrees in education and Jewish Studies from The Hebrew University and the Schechter Institute. His educational work with Mevakshei Derech Congregation in Jerusalem and his serious involvement in the Israel Movement for Progressive Judaism opened a new world to him and created within him the urge to fulfill his ambition of becoming a Reform rabbi, which he views “as a privilege and a religious mission.” Upon completion of his studies, Ezra and his family decided to spend some time in the United States, where he currently serves as the assistant rabbi at Temple Sinai in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Ilana Baird was born in the Russian city of Chelyabinsk, just east of the Ural Mountains, the great-granddaughter of one of the first Jewish businessmen granted permission by the Tsar to live and work in Russia. After making aliyah with her family in 1993, Ilana pursued degrees in the Study of the Land of Israel and History of the Jewish People at Haifa University. She continues to honor her Russian heritage by working with new immigrants and converts from varying backgrounds in Belarus and elsewhere in the FSU, serving as a liaison between communities there and in Israel. She teaches b’nai mitzvah classes for the Russian-speaking community in Israel, and incorporates Hasidic stories into intimate Shabbat services as a means of inspiring a meaningful Jewish and Israeli identity.

Nava Hefetz is the director of the educational department of Rabbis for Human Rights, and is an advocate for human rights programming in the
Israeli Defense Forces and between Israelis and Palestinians. Like many of her generation, she was profoundly influenced by her army service during the Yom Kippur War and the shattering disillusionment that followed. After a career as curator of Beth Hatefusoth – the Museum of the Diaspora in Tel Aviv, and later as a Judaism/Zionism educator, she discovered Reform Judaism for the first time while working with North American Jewish teenagers. Nava sees the rabbinate as a powerful framework from which to advocate for human rights and renewed values in Israel. In her Ordination remarks, she said: “We are commanded to change our nation through justice and law that stem from a Jewish worldview. We are commanded to make our mark on Israeli society as a whole, and to open doors in places where these are shut before us: in the Army and the Knesset, in local authorities, in the educational and cultural systems, in cities and in the country. We must do so since we bring a breath of fresh Jewish air, innovative and creative, speaking in the cultural language of young Israelis.”

Ofek Meir grew up in Jerusalem, immersed in the Israel Movement for Progressive Judaism (IMPJ). He discovered a form of Judaism vastly different from that observed by the majority of Israelis through participation in the IMPJ’s Telem Scouts. Passionate about religious Jewish humanistic education in Israel, he helped found the first Chavaya, Progressive Judaism summer camp; Etgar, a worldwide program that brings Zionist youths to Israel for a year; and the Lokey International Academy of Jewish Studies at the Leo Baeck Education Center in Haifa. Today he officiates as the Rabbi at the Leo Baeck Education Center in Haifa and is director of the project for building the first private Reform Jewish school in Israel, scheduled to open its doors during the school year of 2008.

Corrie (Keren) Zeidler grew up in Holland in a Protestant Christian family, and converted to Judaism after visiting Israel and meeting her future husband, an Israeli, while living on a kibbutz. She became a deeply inquisitive and knowledgeable Jew, completed both a B.A. and Master’s in Hebrew Language at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem and Haifa University, and became a communal leader at Kibbutz Yahel and later at Reform congregation Har-El in Jerusalem. Corrie imparted her love of Judaism and Israel to her family, who later joined her in her religious path, converted to Judaism, and came on aliyah to Israel. She served throughout rabbinical school as student rabbi of the Ma’alot Tivon congregation near Haifa. Her love of Hebrew language and literature has inspired her to translate eleven books from Hebrew to Dutch, among them the works of Shifra Horn, Zeruya Shalev, David Grossman, and Dan Tsalka.

Dr. Yoram Dinstein, Chair of the Jerusalem Board of Overseers (left), and Rabbi David Ellenson with Professor Aharon Barak, President (Ret.) of The Supreme Court of Israel (center), who was awarded the Doctor of Humane Letters, honoris causa, at the Ordination and Academic Convocation ceremony at Mercaz Shimshon on the HUC-JIR campus in Jerusalem on November 10, 2006.

Professor Barak’s Convocation Address can be found on the HUC-JIR website at www.huc.edu/redirect/barak
Summary Financial Figures

Condensed Statement of Financial Position

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<th>June 30</th>
<th>2006</th>
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Condensed Statement of Activities

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<th>Permanently Restricted</th>
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<td>Total Operating Revenue, Gains and Other Support</td>
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<td>Total Operating Expenses</td>
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HUC-JIR Revenue 2005-2006

- MUM* 32.0%
- Fund Raising 39.0%
- Investment 4.9%
- Tuition (Gross) 14.0%
- Contracted Services 3.9%
- Other 6.2%

* Reform congregations, through the Union for Reform Judaism’s proportional dues program (MUM), provide critically needed support each year. HUC-JIR receives 44 percent of the MUM dues; the remaining 56 percent goes to the URJ.

HUC-JIR Expenses 2005-2006

- Instruction 36.4%
- Academic Support 12.9%
- Maintenance 7.9%
- Development 4.1%
- Institutional Support 17.9%
- Student Stipends & Scholarships 10.2%
- Depreciation 5.5%
- Other 5.1%