



The Jewish Community Center of Greater Washington Camp Participated in Israel Up Close Day Camp Seminar in Israel

For Immediate Release: April 22, 2013

Media Inquiries: JCCGW Chief Communications Officer, Adrienne Fierro, 301-348-3750; afierro@jccgw.org

ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND - The Jewish Community Center of Greater Washington (JCCGW) was selected as one of 10 day camps to participate in a North American program to enhance meaningful Israel connections at JCC day camps.

JCCGW Camp Director Fara Gold recently spent a week in Israel as part of JCC Association's Israel Up Close seminar, designed to enhance Israel programming in JCC day camps. The seminar included educational touring in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, and participation in the four-day training led for all of the summer *shlichim* - the young, post-army Israelis getting ready to spend their summers working as counselors and specialists in JCC camps.

"I found the experience of being in Israel with other camp directors outstanding. We were able to make connections that are hard to make since we are spread out across the country. Most importantly, I was able to meet my summer *shlichim* and get to know them before they started at our camp", said Fara Gold.

JCC Association, the leadership network for Jewish Community Centers in North America, funded the Israel trip for the 10 day camp directors who otherwise would not have been able to attend. "Creating personal connections between campers and staff and Israelis is at the heart of Israel education in our camps," said Jodi Sperling, Director of Camping and Teen Engagement for JCC Association.

Now that Fara has returned, her experience is already making an impact on the ground. "I plan on using what I learned to create programs that establish connections between the campers, their families and the people of Israel. It is the personal relationships and peoplehood connections that we want to see continue long after the summer is over. We are always looking to create connections that last a lifetime.

Camp JCC is part of the JCCGW and is built on the importance of *ruach* (spirit) and *kehilla* (community). Camp JCC programs build strong Jewish identities, foster lasting friendships and create memories that last a lifetime. Visit <http://www.jccgw.org/camp> for more information.

The JCCGW creates a welcoming and inclusive environment, connecting the people of the Jewish community with each other, Israel, and the broader community. We inspire individuals of all ages and backgrounds to enhance their social, physical, intellectual and spiritual well-being through programs of excellence rooted in Jewish values. www.jccgw.org.