

# *About the Florence Melton Adult Mini-School*

## THE FLORENCE MELTON ADULT MINI-SCHOOL IS:

- ▶ The realization of Florence Melton's vision and generosity towards the creation of a sophisticated learning environment for adult Jewish learning.
- ▶ A project of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in partnership with your local sponsoring agency. This is a shining example of Israel-Diaspora cooperation built on mutual respect and commitment, utilizing the strengths of both partners.
- ▶ An international franchise network of 60 schools for adult Jewish learning in the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, South Africa and Australia, comprising 300 faculty members and over 5000 students.
- ▶ Committed to promoting Jewish literacy through the sequential, systematic study of Jewish sources.
- ▶ A two-year program of study comprising four courses: *Rhythms of Jewish Living*, *Purposes of Jewish Living*, *Ethics of Jewish Living* and *Dramas of Jewish Living Throughout the Ages*.
- ▶ An opportunity to study further, beyond the two-year program, in one of our many ten-lesson Rachel Wasserman Scholars Curriculum courses, designed specifically to take our graduates further in their study and understanding of Jewish texts and Jewish subject matter.

## WHAT MAKES THE MINI-SCHOOL UNIQUE?

- ▶ A pluralistic approach to adult Jewish learning, as reflected in the curriculum, teaching and classroom environment.
- ▶ Built on interactive learning, which encourages discussion and critical thinking in an open, non-judgmental atmosphere.
- ▶ Enhancing local educational resources and creating a cadre of dedicated, professional adult Jewish educators.
- ▶ Inviting Mini-School students and graduates world-wide to participate in the Florence Melton Israel Seminar, a unique way to see Israel, exploring Israel's landscapes and history, studying texts on site in context.
- ▶ Offering a variety of ways to access Jewish Adult learning through this Foundations of Jewish Family Living Curriculum, our flagship two-year Core Curriculum, and ongoing engaging study of Jewish texts through the Rachel Wasserman Scholars Curriculum; courses available only to graduates of the Mini-School.
- ▶ Changing the lives of over 20,000 students and alumni throughout the Jewish world.

**For more information, visit our website: [www.fmams.org.il](http://www.fmams.org.il)**

# *A Word about the Course: Foundations of Jewish Family Living*

Congratulations on taking this important first step on a wonderful journey in Jewish learning.

Foundations of Jewish Family Living is a curriculum specially designed for you as a parent, providing you with a thought-provoking encounter with many of the core values of Judaism. The curriculum brings to life many of the Master Stories from our tradition and the profound messages that they convey.

In addition, each lesson contains a variety of traditional as well as contemporary texts surrounding the Master Stories and values providing you and your fellow students a basis for lively, engaging classroom discussion. In cases where the original text (or better said, its translation) are not so kid-accessible, a more child-friendly version of the Master Story is included at the end of the lesson to make retelling of the story at home easier for parents who are interested in doing so.

This rich learning experience will help empower you to take many Jewish conversations home to share with your child. At a time in your family's life when your child is beginning his or her own Jewish education, Foundations of Jewish Family Living provides you with the learning, the language, and the confidence to be a teacher to your own children.

Please note that at times you will not address during class all of the texts included for a given lesson. Also, we leave it to the teacher's discretion to choose to emphasize and discuss certain texts more thoroughly than others.

If at any time you would like to give us feedback on the student reader, its format or contents, we encourage you to do so by contacting our Director of Curriculum Development at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Morey Schwartz, at [mschwartz@fmams.org.il](mailto:mschwartz@fmams.org.il).

# *Acknowledgements and Thanks*

## **THE AUTHOR**

### **CATRIELLA FREEDMAN**

A Los Angeles native, was previously a faculty member for FMAMS, and is currently part of the Gandel (Israeli version of FMAMS) faculty. She has received degrees from Princeton and Harvard in Religion and Jewish Studies, and has studied at the Drisha Institute in Manhattan and Midreshet Lindenbaum in Jerusalem. She lived for many years in Albany, NY where she was an adult educator and Jewish Studies Principal of the Bet Shraga Hebrew Academy. She currently resides in Zikhron Ya'akov, Israel

## **THE DIRECTOR OF CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT**

### **MOREY SCHWARTZ**

Served as FMAMS Director of Curriculum Development since 2002. Prior to moving to Israel in 2000, he served as a congregational rabbi in Overland Park, Kansas, from 1991-2000, where for five of those years he was a teacher in the local Mini-School, teaching the Purposes and Ethics curricula, as well as several post-Mini-School courses. As Director of Curriculum Development, Morey is responsible for the ongoing maintenance of the of the Mini-School curriculum. Toward this end, Morey solicits director and faculty feedback and initiates ongoing discussions on the curriculum. He writes most of the revised materials for the two year core curriculum, and oversees the development and writing of the Scholars Curriculum – the FMAMS graduate courses. He is a graduate of Yeshiva University in New York, with a Master's from the Bernard Revel Graduate School, and ordination from the Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary.

## SPECIAL THANKS TO . . .

**Rabbi Abe Weschler** who reviewed and edited these lessons, translating (or retranslating) and vowelizing many of the Hebrew texts. FMAMS commissioned these translations from the Hebrew/Aramaic originals with the goal of providing readable translations for faculty and students that would be consistent with the analyses in the Faculty Guide. All translations in this curriculum were translated by Rabbi Weschler unless otherwise indicated. Abe served as Chaplain in the US Air force. While stationed near Denver, CO, Abe taught in the local Mini-School from 2003-2005, and returned with his family to live in Israel in 2005.

**Tamar Katz**, administrator of the FMAMS International Office in Jerusalem, who coordinated the formatting and production of this curriculum.

**Irene Bennett** of the FMAMS North American office for her efforts in ensuring high-quality printing of the student reader materials and their distribution to FMAMS' North American sites.

**All those who helped us transition from PEP to Foundations.** The **Parent Education Program** was an adaptation of the two-year core curriculum developed by the Florence Melton Adult Mini-School through generous funding from the **Avi Chai Foundation** over seven years. **Avi Chai** recognized the critical role parents might play in their children's Jewish education, and indeed PEP had a significant impact on over 1400 parents of young children in 23 Melton communities. The data confirming the impact of PEP was impressive. Under the leadership of **Dr. Betsy Dolgin Katz**, the North American Director, **Dr. Mitch Parker** directed the program and wrote about its results. But the experts and staff in the Melton sites all agreed that a new curriculum was due—to be written expressly for the parent cohort with a more discrete time commitment. The idea for Foundations came originally from **Rabbi Loren Sykes**, and Melton staff members **Rabbi Efrat Zarren Zohar** and **Judy Kupchan** helped define its scope and direction. It was left to **Catriella Freedman**, under the guidance and input of **Rabbi Morey Schwartz**, to create the curriculum in its present form and to put her own original stamp on it.

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