

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Dear Colleagues,

I am so pleased to send you this current issue of ICJW Links. As in years past, this edition once again shows ICJW "in action". Our affiliates around the world continue to demonstrate "tikkun olam", whether in their own communities, country or in the diaspora. This is indeed the "highest calling", and our Community Services Coordinators, Vivien Brass of NCJW Australia, and Shirley Payes, New Zealand, have once again collected wonderful examples of ICJW at work around the world. Our work IS our strength so at the dawn of this new calendar year I share my hope that in the months ahead we will indeed go "from strength to strength"....reaching more women and children, speaking out consistent with our principles and resolutions, offering inspiration to those in need, and proudly reflecting our founders' vision of a Jewish Sisterhood around the world.

With best wishes to you all of you,

Sharon Gustafson,
President, ICJW

COMMUNITY SERVICES REPORT



Compiled by Community Service Coordinators Shirley Payes QSO, and Vivien Brass

Introduction:

This year saw many of us meeting together both in Berlin in May and Toronto in November. Much of interest was discussed in a global sense which was both stimulating and interesting. We are also looking forward to the opportunity of sharing experiences again in Jerusalem in May 2013 both at the Executive level and of course at the Herczeg Seminar.

This newsletter is an important forum for us to share our grass roots work, which is vital at a local level, as well as of course what we are doing on an international level. It is a wonderful opportunity to see how other affiliates actually make a difference in their communities and to share those ideas from which we could all get ideas for our own community work.

I would like to share some statistics with you that are indeed staggering when multiplied by the world wide volunteer base from which our ICJW affiliates stem and how many countless hours of volunteerism have emanated and the monetary value that can be put to that number. The statement below was generated by the NCJWA (Vic) volunteer co-ordinator in Melbourne Australia:

“There are more than 6.4 million individuals who volunteer their time in Australia. The impact of

volunteering has been declared to be worth more than the Australian mining industry – its monetary value is over \$200 million a year. If we were to look at just what that contribution would be with our own 150 or so volunteers at NCJWA, we could suggest that if every volunteer worked 2 hours per week at \$20 per hour we have a staggering \$312,000 that they contribute each year to NCJWA.”

We wish you a safe and healthy year 2013
and may we go from strength to strength!

VIVIEN BRASS, President of NCJWA Victoria, Australia
SHIRLEY PAYES QSO, National President of CJW New Zealand



 **AUSTRALIA**

The National Council of Jewish Women of Australia (Inc) consists of a Section from each state in Australia. Some Sections are large and others function with fewer members and participate within their local community.

NCJWA Victoria Section

The **MUM FOR MUM** program has proven to be very successful, with 25 volunteers having completed the initial training and been successfully matched with referees. It has the endorsement of the local Member of Parliament in support of a grant submission to ensure on-going funding of the program.

NCJWA Victoria offers a nine-week Effective Relationships training in the **Empowering Single Women Program**, learning to take risks in relationships, learning how to approach new interactions in positive ways so that the same unhealthy relationship style is not repeated in different relationships. The program enables women to gain skills and confidence in order to create healthy relationships.

Senior Citizens Clubs – 2 clubs are operated by a dedicated team of volunteers on a weekly basis, where the participants enjoy a game of cards and bingo including lunch and most importantly the social inter-action. They also run their own community bus (currently funded by grants and private donations) which is a reliable service for seniors. “**Sage ‘n Thyme**” is a group of senior women who meet weekly, enjoy lunch and have facilitated lively discussions on current affairs. Weekly **duplicate bridge** sessions are held. Our **Golden Age Clubs** support isolated, ageing members of the community from the former Soviet Union on a regular basis in three different locations. They receive education by visiting Rabbis, yiddishkeit, music, appropriate food for the Chagim and a sense of community. They receive referral to social workers as necessary and English lessons. We also offer **Computer Classes** to help Seniors in the community to understand and keep up with technology.

Our **Oppe Shoppe** second hand goods shop - this is an important source of income for our organisation.

In **Books out Loud**, volunteers read and engage in discussion with residents in a number of aged care facilities. This is proving to be popular with the participants and helps to engage new members to NCJWA as well.

Victoria has now engaged a **Volunteer Coordinator** to collect data on each volunteer, enabling the matching of skills and areas of interest. They have introduced a volunteer manual and offer volunteers up-skilling as required.

Our **Advocacy** activities include affiliation to the worldwide coalition of Stop the Traffik, which actively campaigns against the trafficking of women and children by handing out post cards to send to government

representatives, protesting against the slavery of women and children, and to retailers asking if they know the source of the cotton used in their products.

NCJWA Gold Coast Section maintains their community service by giving gift baskets of food those in need at Pesach. They also delivered home-made honey cakes to residents in Aged Care Facilities at Rosh Hashanah.

NCJWA Western Australia Section members continue to be active in the community and provide valued and valuable volunteers to the Perth Jewish Aged Home, the Chevra Kaddisha, the Menora Charity Fund for those in need, Orana House for women who are victims of domestic violence and delivering Meals-on-Wheels.

The members of NCJWA (Inc) continue to assist wherever there is a need in our communities. It does not matter how large or small the Section, there are always members willing to assist.

 **CUBA**

During 2012, Mirta Goldflus from Uruguay and Susie Shmulson from Colombia visited ICJW's affiliate in Cuba, and realized how isolated they are and feel. They arrived in Havana with packages to donate to the Jewish community, because of the many shortages that make life hard in Cuba.

They visited the hair salon staffed by volunteers from the Asociacion Femenina de Cuba, ICJW's Cuban affiliate, that rotates once a month between the 3 synagogues in Havana, for which they donated a hairdryer and a curling iron. They met with the Ambassador of Colombia and enlisted his help to bring in needed items for the community. At a lunch for the Jewish women in La Havana, they were hosted by the President of the Cuban Jewish Community, Adela Dworin, and met engineers, medical doctors, architects and teachers, who had asked for a day off in order to attend the lunch.

The President of the Cuban Community, Adela Dworin, gave a briefing about the Jewish community, their achievements and their needs. She introduced herself as a Master in fundraising, in Yiddish "shnorrer" and she now considers herself as having a PhD degree as a "shnorrer" after receiving a new van donated by the Dallas Community!

Mirta and Susie said: "To find such a close-knit group of people, where everyone cares for the other with no strings attached is unusual. These people, men and women, professionals and not, give everything from themselves: time, love, friendship and courage to keep going on difficult times. Hats off to them! What an example to imitate but then, who will listen?"

"On Friday we attended Shabbat Services together with a large number of people of the Community, usually they are about 160. And we shared dinner with them and with three large groups of American Jews who had come to visit Cuba making sure they could be there on a Friday so as to join the Cuban Jewish Community on Sabbath Eve. The dinner was served by young Jewish volunteers.

"We had one more day before leaving so we spent Shabbat touring and had the most wonderful experience visiting the recycled Hotel Raquel, with its bar LE JAIM, and its Jewish food restaurant "The Heaven Garden". We did not expect to meet one of the young volunteers who had served our table for lunch the day before and worked there. He took us to the Roof of the building with a wonderful view of the Old City and the Sea. There was a higher place with one table to sit four people, which is reserved for special guests. Of course we ate there too. The Hotel has a big stone from Jerusalem at the entrance, and every room has a Hebrew name. It used to be the Hotel where Jews stayed when they came to the city to do their shopping.

"We rented an old car with a local driver, who told us how difficult their life is, which was very sad. We had

to get out and help to push the car each time he stopped, but it was a wonderful day. We saw both sides of La Havana and brought back many memories from our visit. In spite of everything La Havana is a beautiful city

“We realized more than ever that this community is in great need of many things that we take for granted. Because they are so isolated they lack simple things as for example, geriatric diapers, baby diapers, soap, tooth paste, small electronics, clothing for all ages, and money to buy food. What impressed us most was to learn that a medical doctor and other professionals cannot leave the country under any circumstance unless they are under the government’s umbrella.”

“Since ICJW can only give moral support and grants, we would like to encourage those who know about groups or people who will visit the island to bring them money and the articles they need. Our visit to our affiliate and our contact with the whole Jewish community in La Havana was very important and it was a privilege to be able to make it on behalf of ICJW.”

CANADA

Marni Besser, President of the National Council of Jewish Women of Canada, reported that their affiliate celebrated its 115th birthday in 2012. Canadian Sections have a multiplicity of programs, some unique, while others have commonality. Literacy and early childhood support is one of the common themes across the Sections. Here is a sampling of what we offer.

- Sections provide thousands of books for beleaguered inner city schools.
- Children’s authors went to inner city schools, read and then presented their books to the kids.
- The Elizabeth Fry organization joined with us in a program to have children whose moms’ were incarcerated read books to them. These absentee mothers, who were encouraged to read, recorded stories for children. . The tapes were given to the family so that the children heard the written word spoken by their mothers.
- We have diverse literacy activities: ‘Reading Angels’, a ‘Beyond 3:30 Boys Book Club’ and ‘After School Homework Club’.
- ‘Just for Me’ backpacks.
- Norwood Healthy Start Program to enhance mental, physical and social health of youngsters.
- Financial support to inner city daycare facilities.

Women’s wellness/health education has been addressed by Healthy Bones program, a Women’s Health Education Series and a Woman’s Support Network and, the L’Chaim Cancer Support for Jewish Women.

Responses to challenges facing Jewish families around the holidays have given rise to Chanukah parties for disadvantaged children, Purim Shalach Manot baking and distribution and, unfortunately, in Toronto the need to have the 29th annual Passover Food Drive.

On a national level, our fundraising campaign for ALUMA: the Israeli Family Counseling Agency. ALUMA provides essential care for Israelis needing access to available premarital, marital, family counseling and divorce mediation. Preparation for physically and mentally challenged adults to live independently is provided. ALUMA is a venue where graduate students in psychology and social work are able to have placements.

We also keep busy with advocacy in response to many issues: human rights, the environment and sustainability, immigrants’ rights, anti-Semitism/anti-Israel, violence against women and girls, and of course, human trafficking. This year we received a Canadian government certificate of appreciation from the Member of Parliament for Kildonan-St. Paul, Joy Smith for the work we have done to support the second human trafficking bill in passage to enactment.

 **ISRAEL**

Aviva Kohlmann, Adv., Vice President of the Council of Women's Organizations in Israel and ICJW Vice President, reports on the notable events surrounding the status of women in Israel during 2012.

She expressed her appreciation for the concern and support that the Council of Women's Organizations in Israel has received from ICJW and its affiliates, and pointed out that there is a huge gap between what the majority of women in Israel experience, concerning their active involvement in the public space and what appears in the international media.

Nevertheless, we should not ignore the phenomenon of the attempted limitation of women's rights that we have seen in Israel recently, which are trying to bring us back to the Dark Ages. Indeed, it was shameful and hurting to witness incidents of exclusion of women in the public space – women in Israel were shocked!

We are living in the only democratic country in the Middle East. We are proud of our achievements in the field of gender equality, of the equal opportunities women have reached, we are proud of our women ministers, women members of the Parliament, women heading big political parties, high rank women - officers in the Army, women judges, a woman presiding over the Supreme Court, women medical doctors, women university professors, directors of banks and so on. Women and men have built this country together, as equals.

The incidents that we have experienced this year do not fit in this picture. Under the influence of an extreme Orthodox minority group, we witnessed the most unsuitable demands, such as gender segregation in buses, in cemeteries, in the Army, exclusion from public ceremonies, from official committees, and from certain radio stations.

We cannot let women be erased from the public eye. That is a dangerous erosion of the status of women. It is a slippery slope and that is unacceptable. The Ultra-Orthodox should know that religious pluralism and women's rights are integral to a free and open society. Women in Israel should be seen and heard!

Women's organizations that are members of the Council of Women's Organizations in Israel (CWOI) protested by calling on the Knesset, the government and the judicial system, to hold firm and to stop occurrences of women's exclusion from public spaces and decision-making bodies. We also called on the citizens of Israel to be aware of this phenomenon and protest against it, so that decision-makers understand. We issued and signed petitions out of deep concern to the nature of public space and the place of women within it, in order to alert against this trend.

We voiced outrage at the political deal that has left the Commission to Appoint Dayanim (Rabbinical court judges) without a single female member for the first time in 12 years. Emunah and other NGOS filed a petition with the Supreme Court of Israel which resulted in a court order to stop the Commission's proceedings pending its decision on the constitution of the Commission.

The CWOI also initiated an emergency meeting with Member of Parliament, Zippi Hotobely, who is the Chairperson of the Committee for Status of Women in the Knesset. This Committee held a meeting on the subject of exclusion of women from the public space in Israel and proposed a bill to introduce into the criminal law prison punishments for anybody who violates the equal public rights of women. The Knesset is also increasing punishments against those who are breaking the Law of Gender Equality. We trust our judiciary bodies to implement the law in Israel.

Ministers and Members of the Knesset are very much aware of and worried about this situation and, have established an ad hoc inter-ministerial committee headed by Limor Livnat, Minister of Culture and Sports and

Chairperson of Ministerial Committee on the Advancement of Status of Women, to deal with this new phenomenon, saying we should show zero tolerance towards any violation of Gender Equality.

The Minister said: "The exclusion of women is a form of violence. Since the establishment of the State of Israel, women have struggled for equality in terms of career opportunities, employment conditions and salaries, as well as social status and in professional respect. This is happening in addition to fighting for effective legislation dealing with violence against women, including domestic violence, sexual harassment and sexual abuse. Progress has been painfully slow – but progress has been made. We have today 24 women Knesset members – more than ever before – and more women in senior management positions. But there is a worrisome deterioration in the Status of Women in the public space. The exclusion of women is a type of violence against women."

The Minister was particularly outraged by a practice in certain cemeteries where the Chevra Kadisha (burial society) prevents women from eulogizing the dead and walking behind bodies brought for burial.

Action being taken:

- One of the decisions calls for the Ministry of Religious Affairs and the Justice Ministry to draft a clause in Chevra Kadisha's license, clearly stating that women can mourn the dead and walk behind the coffin of their loved ones in cemeteries.
- The minister also noted an incident where two female-professor- researchers, who won an award as part of a Health Ministry event, were not allowed to get on the podium to accept it, while a man had to accept it on their behalf.
- Minister Limor Livnat has asked Civil Service officials to publish strict instructions forbidding any exclusion of women from official ceremonies.
- Gender segregation on public streets in Jerusalem has been declared illegal.
- Gender segregation on public buses is illegal and punishable.
- Israeli lawmakers criticized ultra-Orthodox radio station for keeping women off the air.

Even the Chief Rabbi of Israel, Rabbi Yona Metzger said: "Haredim have no right to force segregation on buses. This country does not belong to the haredi community. The public domain must be kept "open and safe" for all Israeli citizens."

The CWOI's Plan of Action:

We are calling on the Knesset, the government and the judicial system to hold firm and prevent occurrences of women's exclusion from public spaces and decision making bodies.

Our plans include:

1. Introducing new education programs in kindergartens and schools concerning gender equality.
2. Implementation of the existing law of Gender Equality and increasing the punishment for violations.
3. We are acting as "watchdogs" on the status of women in Israel and running anti-violation campaigns.

We thank ICJW and our sister affiliates for their support.



Jessica Kreimerman Lew reports on the Community Service Activities of the Consejo Mexicano de Mujeres Israelitas (CMMI). They donated a multi-media audio system and a VHS player and 20 cassettes with children's themes to Kinder Israel. They arranged visits to the El Papalote children's museum for 150 children

from various schools and kindergartens. In January, members of CMMI gave gifts to the children at CADI 20 (children's assistance development center), at the local Israel kindergarten, Anna Frank school and CIVINC (the blind children's school). To celebrate Children's Day in May, they prepared children's gifts for Kinder Israel, CADI 20 and the Anne Frank school nursery, and arranged a concert by Coroh Rinah, the Ashkenazi community choir, at the Centro de Niños y Niñas Children's Shelter. They also took the children from the shelter to visit the Bimbo bread Factory and on tours of the city aboard Turibus double decker buses.

At the other end of the spectrum, CMMI also donated arts and crafts materials to the local old age home, the Centro Gerontologico Vicente Garcia Torres. Through Facebook and other local networks, they are advertising the needs of both the shelter and the old age home, and this has already yielded results, with people offering to visit the elderly residents and to donate money and materials.



NEW ZEALAND

The Council of Jewish Women of NZ has five branches, but really only two of them are really active. The Wellington branch is the most active of all. Hospital visiting used to be a large part of their social services, but in Wellington they now have social workers, so the Council's work is really only the hospital visiting. In Wellington the two congregations are, like most places, short of funds. The local Branch of the Council decided to run a few functions to help the situation. The first function was to call on all the 'artists' in the community to 'buy' a stall and sell their wares. There were 15 stalls, from white elephant to quilting to hand made toys etc. The day was a success and enjoyed by all. The second function was a Gala Dinner. For a small community this was also well attended, by both Jewish and non-Jewish people. All enjoyed the food and more importantly they enjoyed the friendliness of the evening. The last project was a film evening at the local cinema. For a very small community and a small CJW I must say that the work they do within the community is outstanding.



SOUTH AFRICA

The **Port Elizabeth** section, one of the smaller groups, has carried out hospital visits and organized a local Association for the Disabled, a Chanukah lunch for seniors at Club 42, and several successful book sales. They have started a skills class for ladies from the township for knitting lessons and they distributed 220 kg of school clothing that they received from Australia to two local schools. They also assisted in the local flood disaster appeal in the city, collecting blankets, food and clothing for those who lost their homes, and distributed food parcels and blankets to young vulnerable people in Jeffries Bay.

The **Johannesburg** section ran a very successful Kosher Chef competition and their Hillbrow soup kitchen and Kosher Meals continues to run very well. Their Friendship Club luncheons are well attended and they organized very good AED lectures. Every month they pack up food parcels and clothes for orphaned children in child-headed families in Pimville. They also help the Lutheran Church with a feeding scheme and a sewing school.

The **Cape Town** section held a tea party to honor patrons and benefactors, a Friendship Club luncheon, and also an 80th Birthday party. Among their active groups doing amazing outreach work are the Constantia Group, Flower Group, Milnerton Group, Florentia Group, Keshet Group, Na'Arot Group, Simchat Group, Strand Somerset West Group. The Cape Town adult education program is running well and they continue to support crèches in Kensington crèches and the St Lukes calendar. Their Women's Resource Centre is well used and they provide comfort packs for local rape crisis clinics. They are fundraising for Yad Sarah in Israel.

The **Durban** section has initiated a craft initiative called Umcebo and held a successful Morning of Cards

fundraiser. They organize functions at children's homes and senior citizens residences and sponsor prizes at 2 local special needs schools. They will hold their annual Chanukah and doughnut tea at Beth Shalom.

The **East London** section committee learned to bake Challah this year and enjoyed a cup cake making demonstration. They hosted a Friendship Club Lunch. Among the local projects they support are the Greensleeves refuge for children and the Masimanyane Women's Support Centres, which they supply with comfort packs and clothing for rape victims. They have also collected clothing for the Salem Baby Centre and shoes for the Donald Woods Foundation, and through their fundraising efforts they donated a generous cheque to the charity 'Reach for a Dream'.

The **Pretoria** section supplies Ebenezer House of Hope with fruit, vegetables and groceries, and has been assisting the Tiyang Disabilities for Day and Night Care Centre with much needed equipment, as their situation is dire.



The President of the League of Jewish Women, Marilyn Brummer, reports on 2012 as a busy year organizing Seminars and continuing with our voluntary work. One field of work which is popular with both the recipients and volunteers is their Way Ahead scheme, which helps women who have suffered hair loss, usually because of chemotherapy, to obtain hair coverings, not wigs. We show patients how to tie scarves in attractive styles and demonstrate other styles for hair coverings. We sell the goods at little more than cost price and patients appreciate not only the convenience but also the volunteers' helpful attitude. LJW has also organized tea parties at Old Age Homes, not necessarily Jewish ones.

Mitzvah Day has become a significant event in British Jewry as an opportunity for members of the community to carry out voluntary service on a particular day. The women of LJW have become enthusiastic supporters of Mitzvah Day, together with other ethnic groups and members of other religions, organizing collections of food and toiletries to distribute to the homeless and deprived.



Mitzvah Day 2012 fell on the same day as the Jewish Ex-Serviceman's Parade which is held annually in Central London. All the traffic is stopped and the Jewish community is the only group which has this special honour. This year, LJW had a contingent of members marching under their banner.



NCJW reports on the projects organized by their various local Sections.

Back to School in Style

Thousands of children who would have otherwise struggled to gather what they needed for school were instead served by the Back 2 School Store program run by the St. Louis and Essex County (NJ) sections. The project serves disadvantaged school children ages 5-10 who are selected by local social service organizations, churches, synagogues and shelters. Other NCJW sections around the country offer variations of the program, including Pittsburgh, Minneapolis, St. Paul, Detroit and Cleveland.

The one-day event, set up like a department store, helps kids start the school year with enthusiasm and positive self-esteem. With the help of volunteer personal shoppers, kids pick out a complete new outfit and

supplies without their parents. While their children shop, parents pick up health and social service information and make use of a mobile medical van for screenings. Back 2 School Stores programs are funded through a combination of grants, in-kind donations and sponsor-a-child campaigns run by local NCJW sections.

NCJW/Lilith Magazine Salons

In the fall, NCJW sections around the country held NCJW/Lilith Magazine Salons in their communities. A few, like the Tri-County Section in Chicago, got a head start this summer, hosting a pilot salon to test drive the program with their section members. Every section that has already hosted a salon received great feedback from attendees and all are formally launching the program for FY 2013. Some sections had such a positive response that they are planning to host more than one salon session and are already considering expanding their salons to include outside groups as a way of engaging members of their community in important conversations.

Voter Mobilization

Through its signature program “Promote the Vote, Protect the Vote”, NCJW mobilized Jewish women across the country to vote in the November Presidential Elections. This included voter registration drives, Get-Out-The-Vote training, education about issues and specific ballot initiatives, and advocacy to protect voting rights. In addition to Florida and Ohio, Promote the Vote, Protect the Vote initiatives are being organized in California, Colorado, Connecticut, Illinois, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Texas and Washington.

Food for Soldiers

The High Holy Days celebrations for Jewish soldiers stationed in Afghanistan were sweeter this year thanks to NCJW Cleveland Section volunteers, who are part of the group’s “Traditions in the Kitchen” program. More than 400 baked goods, along with packages of dried apples and honey, were shipped to 14 Jewish U.S. soldiers, some stationed in the United States and others deployed in active duty in Europe and Asia. Boxes of treats were also sent to Jewish soldiers in the Louis Stokes Cleveland VA Medical Center. NCJW president Faye Bass created a greeting card included in each gift box, which read “L’Shanah Tova 5773, best wishes for a new year filled with health, happiness and peace from your friends at National Council of Jewish Women, Cleveland Section.”

Kosher Cookbook

NCJW’s New Bedford Section published its “Taste of the World” Kosher Cookbook, with proceeds to benefit the section’s HUG Project and scholarships. The section gives about 10 scholarships a year to young people in the community, and the criteria is need. It also awards scholarships to domestic violence survivors and graduates of foster care programs, as well as provide outreach through their HUG Project to assist women in shelters.

"Stop Human Trafficking" Project

The Sacramento section spearheaded three key initiatives to support its anti-human trafficking program. The Passover Initiative involved organizing 5 Sacramento area rabbis to obtain their commitment to educate and activate their congregations on the issue of human trafficking. They sponsored “Human Trafficking, What It Is and What We Can Do” — a forum specifically directed to the Jewish community in co-sponsorship with Hadassah and area congregations. Finally, the CA SPA network was instrumental in ensuring that SB1193, the CA anti-trafficking law, passed.

New NCJW Online Community in the Works

NCJW has received a \$500,000 grant from the Mandel Foundation to support a web-based initiative to transform the way it facilitates grassroots community activism, nationwide advocacy and leadership development. With this award NCJW will build a robust online community providing an interactive platform for women of all ages who care about advancing social change as part of a collaborative national network. This new online community will be fully social media-compatible so users can connect directly with their Facebook, Twitter, or other social media accounts or choose to have a unique profile. The grant will also allow NCJW to build a mobile site to allow easy access to and interaction with content on the go, as well as

enhancing its online giving capacity.

New Health Benefits for Women

Thanks to the Affordable Care Act (ACA, the 2010 health care law), from August 1, 2012 seven new women's health care services became available without additional payment. This means that contraceptives, well-woman, visits, STI and HIV screenings are among the new services classified as preventative care that all insurance plans are now mandated to cover without additional fees. NCJW produced print and online materials, made available to NCJW sections, to help spread the word in communities, including a factsheet detailing preventive benefits, e-cards, infographics to share on Facebook, and a Twitter Empower Hour to spur action.

Women's Empowerment in Israel

Through our Israel Granting Program, NCJW is part of the Jewish Women's Collaborative International Fund. In July the Fund announced a \$150,000 grant over two years to Itach-Maaki, the lead organization of Bringing Women to the Fore: A Feminist Partnership. The grant will be used to promote gender equality and women's rights and to minimize gender gaps on a variety of issues in Israel through large-scale social and media campaigns.

CALENDAR EVENTS

February 19-22, 2013	ICJW Latin American Regional Conference in Barranquilla, Colombia
May 2, 2013	ICJW Nominating Committee Meeting in Jerusalem, Israel
May 2-3, 2013	ICJW Executive Committee Meeting in Jerusalem, Israel
May 5-8, 2013	ICJW Herczeg Education Seminar in Jerusalem
November, 2013	ICJW Executive Meeting in Chicago
May 1-3, 2014	ICJW Executive Meeting in Prague
May 4-7, 2014	ICJW Quadrennial Convention, Prague

ICJW NEWS

Centenary Conference in Berlin

ICJW marked its centenary at its 2012 European Regional Conference in Berlin, Germany, in May 2012. ICJW's Executive Committee, meeting on May 1, 2012, passed three resolutions reflecting current concerns about the status of Jewish women in Israel and around the world, and the resurgence of anti-Semitism in parts of Europe.

The first resolution expressed ICJW's strong support for the women of Israel who are experiencing discrimination in the public space. ICJW's Executive Committee urges the Israeli authorities to ensure that all legislation to prevent such discrimination is strictly enforced.

Reports were presented at the meeting from ICJW's affiliate in Hungary about the growing problem of state-sponsored anti-Semitism in their country. The Executive Committee recommended that all ICJW affiliates should forward this report to representative Jewish organizations in their own countries, and to their representatives at the European Parliament where applicable. ICJW also plans to inform the World Jewish Congress of their concerns about the situation in Hungary.

The plight of Agunot is an on-going priority issue for ICJW. The Executive Committee's third resolution recommended that wherever there is a known Agunah in a community, the local ICJW affiliate should

employ appropriate social action to draw attention to the problem, by such means as demonstrations and demands that the husband be excluded from the community.

ICJW President Sharon Gustafson welcomed these three resolutions as confirming the organization's renewed commitment to activism on national and international issues of concern to Jewish women, promoting a just society based on human rights and Jewish values. Reviewing 100 years of activism by ICJW women throughout its history, she said "The same "biblical imperative" which prompted our founders in 1912 to embrace civil action is prompting many of our leaders today".

November 2012 Toronto Executive Meeting

ICJW's Executive Meeting in November 2012 was hosted by the National Council of Jewish Women of Canada. On the second day, the Executive participated in a special discussion session to explore ICJW's future in the changing local and global settings facing the Affiliates and their members. The participants discussed the relevant work that ICJW can advance in the next 5 years. ICJW President Sharon Gustafson is shown here with Roz Fine, Vice President ICJW for Canada, who arranged the Toronto meeting.



May 2013 Herczeg Seminar in Jerusalem



The ICJW Herczeg Jerusalem Seminar for Jewish Education will take place on May 5-8, 2013, at the Jerusalem Gardens Hotel in Jerusalem. It will explore the Jewish perspective on many contemporary issues under the theme: "Judaism as a Universal Language." The Seminar will familiarize the participants with Jewish sources on issues currently on the international and local agenda, in order to understand the relevancy of the Jewish perspective to those issues. The topics will include the protection of the environment and

sustainable development, immigration and migrants, social justice and the impact of social media, and the status of women and children.

Held every 4 years, ICJW's educational seminar attracts Jewish women from all over the world who are involved in communal work through ICJW's affiliate organizations. Many come to study Jewish topics in order to return and apply them in various communal programs, especially those geared toward women and the empowerment of women.

The Seminar will include lectures and panels on Jewish sources, round table discussions, site visits to interesting places in Israel, and opportunities to encounter Jewish women who are innovators and influencers in their fields. The Seminar's gala opening will take place at the Bible Lands' Museum and visits will include the Golda Meir International Training Center in Haifa, the Athlit Detention Camp Museum, and Environmental Renewal sites in the Carmel Forest.

For more information and to register for the 2013 Herczeg Seminar, visit www.icjw.org.